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For Mary L. H. Rousseau

from Cousin Cyrus

Xmas. 1892

MESSRS. ROBERTS BROTHERS' PUBLICATIONS.

THE DOLL-WORLD SERIES.

BY MRS. ROBERT O'REILLY.

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One rarely meets with three so thoroughly charming and satisfactory books for children as the "Doll-World Series," by Mrs. Robert O'Reilly. Their author seems to possess — and in a high degree — every one of the very peculiar and varied characteristics which fit one to be a good writer for the young. She is humorous, — one ought perhaps to say funny, for that is the word which the children understand best; and Mrs. O'Reilly's wit is not the sly satire which appeals in a kind of aside to the adults present, but the bubbling merriment which is addressed directly to the ready risibles of her proper audience. She is pathetic also, with the keen, transitory pathos which belongs to childhood, a pathos never too much elaborated or too distressingly prolonged. She is abundantly dramatic. Her stories are full of action. Her incidents, though never forced or unnatural, are almost all picturesque, and they succeed one another rapidly.

Nevertheless we have not yet noted Mrs. O'Reilly's chief excellence as a story-writer, nor is it easy to find a single word to express that admirable quality. We come nearest it, perhaps, when we say that her tales have absolute *reality*; there is in them no suggestion of being made up, no visible composition. The illusion of her pictures is so perfect that it is not illusion. This *note* of reality, which ought to be prevalent in any romance, is positively indispensable in a juvenile one, and it is perfectly delivered by one only of our native writers of children's books. That one is of course Miss Alcott. Her "Little Women" are as real as Daisy Grey and Bessie Somers; the "Little Men" very nearly so. We have other writers who approach Miss Alcott, more or less closely: Mrs. Walker, Aunt Fanny, Susan Coolidge in the more realistic parts of the "New Year's Bargain;" and indeed the latter writer comes so near *truth*, and is also so like the author of the "Doll World" stories in the quality of her talent, that one hopes her next essay may be absolutely successful in this regard.

From the New York Tribune.

The pretty edition of Mrs. Robert O'Reilly's works, just issued by Messrs. Roberts Brothers, will be welcome to a throng of juvenile readers as the first gift-book of the autumn. It is hard to say which of the three charming volumes comprised in this series will be most liked at the nursery hearth. We fancy "Doll World" appeals most tenderly to the affections of little matrons with baby-houses and families of wood and wax to care for; though "Deborah's Drawer," with its graceful interlinking of story with story, is sure to be the elected favorite of many. Our own preference is for "Daisy's Companions," and this for a reason less comprehensible to children than to older people; namely, that the story closes, leaving the characters in the midst of their childish lives, and without hint of further fate or development.

There are few books for children which we can recommend so thoroughly and so heartily as hers. And as one of our wise men has told us that "there is a want of principle in making amusements for children dear," Messrs. Roberts Brothers deserve thanks for giving us these volumes in a form at once so tasteful and so inexpensive.

Sold everywhere. Mailed, postpaid, by the Publishers,

ROBERTS BROTHERS, BOSTON.

MESSRS. ROBERTS BROTHERS' PUBLICATIONS.

AUNT JO'S SCRAP-BAG.

BY LOUISA M. ALCOTT.

Vol. I. Comprising "My Boys," &c. 16mo. Cloth, gilt.
Price $1.00.

From the London Athenæum.

A collection of fugitive tales and sketches which we should have been sorry to lose. Miss Alcott's boys and girls are always delightful in her hands. She throws a loving glamour over them; and she loves them herself so heartily that it is not possible for the reader to do otherwise. We have found the book very pleasant to read.

From the New York Tribune.

The large and increasing circle of juveniles who sit enchanted year in and out round the knees of Miss Alcott will hail with delight the publication of "Aunt Jo's Scrap-Bag." The most taking of these taking tales is, to our fancy, "My Boys;" but all possess the quality which made "Little Women" so widely popular, and the book will be welcomed and read from Maine to Florida.

Mrs. Hale, in Godey's Lady's Book.

These little stories are in every way worthy of the author of "Little Women." They will be read with the sincerest pleasure by thousands of children, and in that pleasure there will not be a single forbidden ingredient. "My Boys," which, opening upon by chance, we read through at a sitting, is charming. Ladislas, the noble, sweet-tempered Pole, is the original of Laurie, ever to be remembered by all "Aunt Jo's" readers.

From the Providence Press.

Dear Aunt Jo! You are embalmed in the thoughts and loves of thousands of little men and little women. Your scrap-bag is rich in its stores of good things. Pray do not close and put it away quite yet.

This is Louisa Alcott's Christmas tribute to the young people, and it is, like herself, *good*. In making selections, "Aunt Jo's Scrap-Bag" must not be forgotten. There will be a vacant place where this little volume is not.

Sold everywhere. Mailed, postpaid, by the Publishers,

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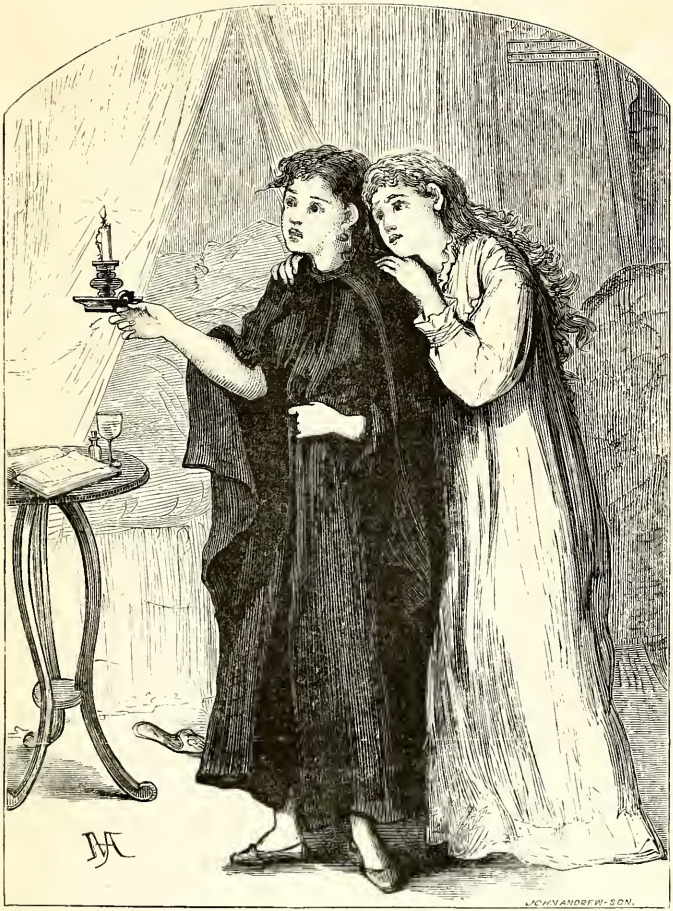
The Consultation — Trunks or "Shawl-Straps." — PAGE 69.



"Let's see what it is;" and, lighting a candle, the fair Amazons looked boldly about. — PAGE 113.

AUNT JO'S SCRAP-BAG.

SHAWL-STRAPS.

BY LOUISA M. ALCOTT,

AUTHOR OF "LITTLE WOMEN," "AN OLD-FASHIONED GIRL," "LITTLE MEN," "HOSPITAL SKETCHES."

BOSTON:
ROBERTS BROTHERS.
1873.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1872, by
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CAMBRIDGE:
PRESS OF JOHN WILSON AND SON.

PREFACE.

THERE is a sort of fate about writing books of travel which it is impossible to escape. It is vain to declare that no inducement will bribe one to do it, that there is nothing new to tell, and that nobody wants to read the worn-out story: sooner or later the deed is done, and not till the book is safely shelved does peace descend upon the victim of this mysterious doom.

The only way in which this affliction may be lightened to a long-suffering public is to make the work as cheerful and as short as possible. With this hope the undersigned bore has abstained from giving the dimensions of any church, the population of any city, or description of famous places, as far as in her lay; but confined herself to the personal haps and mishaps, adventures and experiences, of her wanderers.

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To explain the undue prominence given to Miss Lavinia, it should be stated that she is an old and intimate friend of the compiler of this frivolous work; and therefore her views on all subjects, though less valuable, were easier to obtain than those of the younger and more interesting shawl-strappists.

L. M. A.

NOVEMBER, 1872.

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SHAWL-STRAPS.

I.

OFF.

"ON the first day of February we three will sail from Boston for Messina, in the little fruit ship 'Wasp.' We shall probably be a month going, unless we cross in a gale as I did, splitting sails every night, and standing on our heads most of the way," said Amanda, folding up her maps with an air of calm decision.

"Hurrah! what fun!" cried Matilda, waving a half-finished dressing-case over her head.

But Lavinia, with one sepulchral groan, fell flat upon her bed, and lay there, dumb with the horrors of such a voyage.

"Just the thing for you, my poor old dear. Think of the balmy airs of Sicily, the oranges, the flowers. Then a delicious month or two at Sorrento, with no east winds, no slosh, no spring cleaning. We shall

be as merry as grigs, and get as buxom as dairy-maids in a month," said the sprightly Amanda.

"You promised to go, and if you back out we are lost, for we *must* have a duenna. You can lie round in Europe just as well as here, and I have no doubt it will do you a world of good," added Matilda.

"I shall keep my word, but you will bury me in the Atlantic, so make up your minds to it. Do you suppose that I, a poor, used-up, old invalid, who can't look at a sail-boat without a qualm, can survive thirty days of standing on my head, and thirty nights of sail-splitting, as we go slamming and lurching across two or three awful oceans?" demanded Lavinia, with the energy of despair.

Before any one could reply, Amanda's little Mercury appeared with a note.

"The 'Wasp' will *not* take passengers, and no other fruit ship sails this spring," read Amanda.

"Oh dear!" sighed Matilda.

"Saved!" cried Lavinia.

"Be calm: we shall go, sooner or later, if I buy a ship and sail her myself;" with which indomitable remark Amanda went forth to grapple with and conquer untoward circumstances.

A month of plans, vicissitudes, and suspense followed, during which Amanda strove manfully, Matilda suffered agonies of hope and fear, and Lavinia remained a passive shuttlecock, waiting to be tossed wherever Fate's battledore chose to send her.

"Exactly two weeks from to-day, we sail with a party of friends in the French steamer 'Lafayette,' from New York for Brest. Will you be ready?" demanded Amanda, after a protracted wrestle with aforesaid adverse circumstances.

"But that is exactly what we didn't mean to do. It's expensive and fashionable, France and not Italy, north and not south."

"That's because I'm in the party. If you take a Jonah nothing will go well. Leave me behind, and you will have a charming trip," said Lavinia, who had an oyster-like objection to being torn from her bed.

"No matter, we are going, live or die, sink or swim; and I shall expect to meet you, all booted and spurred and fit for the fight, April first," said the unwavering Amanda.

"A most appropriate day for three lone women to start off on a wild-goose chase after health and

pleasure," groaned Lavinia from among her pillows.

"Very well, then, I leave you now, and shall expect to meet on the appointed day?"

"If I'm spared," answered the sufferer.

"I'll bring her, never fear," added the sanguine Mat, as she rattled the trays out of an immense trunk.

How they ever did it no one knows; but in a week every thing was ready, and the sisters had nothing left to do but to sit and receive the presents that showered upon them from all quarters. How kind every one was, to be sure! Six fine dressing-cases arrived, and were hung upon the walls; four smelling-bottles, one for each nostril; bed-socks; rigolettes; afghans; lunch-baskets; pocket-flasks; guide-books; needle-cases; bouquets in stacks; and a great cake with their names on top in red and blue letters three inches long.

Friendly fingers sewed for them; even the gentlemen of the house, and there were eight, had a "bee" and hemmed handkerchiefs for Mat, marked towels; and one noble being actually took off his coat and packed the trunks in layers of mosaic work wonder-

ful to behold. A supper celebrated the last evening; and even the doleful Lavinia, touched by such kindness, emerged from her slough of despond and electrified the ball by dancing a jig with great spirit and grace.

Devoted beings were up at dawn to share the early breakfast, lug trunks, fly up and down with last messages, cheer heartily as the carriage drove off, and then adjourn *en masse* to the station there to shake hands all round once more, and wave and wring handkerchiefs as the train at last bore the jocund Mat and the resigned Lavinia toward the trysting-place and Amanda.

All along the route, more friends kept bursting into the cars as they stopped at different places, more gifts, more hand-shakes and kisses, more good wishes and kind prophecies, till at last in a chaos of smiles, tears, smelling-bottles, luncheon, cloaks, books, and foot-warmers, the travellers left the last friendly face behind and steamed away to New York.

"How de-licious this is!" cried the untravelled Matilda, as they stepped upon the deck of the "Lafayette," and she sniffed the shippy fragrance that caused Lavinia to gasp and answer darkly, —

"Wait till to-morrow."

While Mat surveyed the steamer under the care of Devoted Being No. 10, who appeared to see them off, Lavinia arranged the state-room, stowing away all useless gear and laying forth dressing-gowns, slippers, pocket-handkerchiefs with an anguished smile. *She* had crossed the ocean twice, and was a wiser, sadder woman for it. At eight she turned in, and ten minutes later Amanda came aboard with a flock of gay friends. But no temptations of the flesh could lure the wary spinster from her den; for the night was rough and cold and the steamer a Babel of confusion.

"It's perfectly delightful! I wish you'd been there, Livy. We had supper, and songs, and funny stories, and all sorts of larks. There are quantities of nice people aboard, and we shall have a perfectly splendid trip. I shall be up bright and early, put on my scarlet stockings, my new boots, and pretty sea suit, and go in for a jolly day," said the ardent Matilda, as she came skipping down at midnight and fell asleep full of rosy visions of the joys of a

"Life on the ocean wave."

"Deluded child!" sighed Lavinia, closing her dizzy eyes upon the swaying garments on the wall, and feebly wishing she had hung herself along with them.

In the gray dawn, she was awakened by sounds of woe, and peering forth beheld the festive Matilda with one red stocking on and one off, her blonde locks wildly dishevelled, her face of a pale green, and her hands clasping lemons, cologne, and salts, as she lay with her brow upon the cool marble of the toilet table.

"How do you like it, dear?" asked the unfeeling Lavinia.

"Oh what is it? I feel as if I was dying. If somebody would only stop the swing *one* minute. Is it sea-sickness? It's awful, but it will do me good. Oh, yes! I hope so. I've tried every thing and feel worse and worse. Hold me! save me! Oh, I wish I hadn't come!"

"Shipmates ahoy! how are you, my loves?" and Amanda appeared rosy, calm, and gay with her pea-jacket on, skirts close reefed, hat well to windward, and every thing taut and ship-shape, for she was a fine sailor and never missed a meal.

Wails greeted her, and faint inquiries as to the state of things in the upper world.

"Blowing a gale; rain, hail, and snow, — very dirty weather; and we are flying off the coast in fine style," was the cheerful reply.

"Have we split any sails?" asked Lavinia, not daring to open her eyes.

"Dozens I dare say. Shipping seas every five minutes. All the passengers ill but me, and every prospect of a north-easter all the way over," continued the lively Amanda, lurching briskly about the passage with her hands in her pockets.

Matilda dropped her lemons and her bottles to wring her hands, and Lavinia softly murmured, —

> "'Lord, what fools we mortals be,
> That we ever go to sea!'"

"Breakfast, ladies?" cried the pretty French stewardess prancing in with tea-cups, bowls of gruel, and piles of toast balanced in some miraculous manner all over her arms.

"Oh, take it away! I shall never eat again," moaned Matilda, clinging frantically to the marble, as the water-pitcher went down the middle with a

hair-brush, and all the boots and shoes had a grand promenade round the room.

"Don't speak to me; don't look at me; don't even *think* of me for three days at least. Go and enjoy yourself, and leave us to our doom," with which tragical remark Lavinia drew her curtains and was seen no more.

Great heavens, what a week that was! Rain, wind, fog; creak, pitch, toss; noise, smells, cold. Broken sleep by day, woe in every variety by night, food and drink a delusion and a snare, society an affliction, life a burden, death a far-off blessing not to be had at any price. Slowly, slowly the victims emerge from the lower depths of gloom, feebly smile, faintly joke, pick fearfully but wistfully at once-rejected dishes; talk about getting up, but don't do it; read a little, look at their sallow countenances in hand-glasses, and speculate upon the good effects of travel upon the constitution. Then they suddenly become daring, gay, and social; rise, adorn themselves, pervade the cabins, sniff the odors of engine and kitchen without qualms, play games, go to table, and just as the voyage is over begin to enjoy it.

Alas for poor Lavinia! no such resurrection was

possible for her. Long after Mat had bravely donned the scarlet hose, cocked up her beaver and gone forth to festive scenes, her shipmate remained below in chrysalis state, fed by faithful Marie, visited by the ever-cheerful Amanda, and enlivened by notes and messages from fellow-sufferers in far-off cells.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Walmars, Jr., called and had private theatricals in the passage. Dried-ginger parties were held about the invalid's berth, poems were composed, and conundrums circulated. A little newspaper was concocted, replete with wit and spirit, by these secluded ladies, and called the "Sherald," to distinguish it from the "Herald" got up by sundry gentlemen whose shining hours were devoted to flirtation, cards, and wine.

"Perfect gentlemen, I assure you, my dear; for, drunk or sober, they wear yellow kids from morning till night, smoke the best cigars, and dance divinely," as Mrs. Twaddle said, sitting erect in the saloon, shrouded in fur and velvet, with five diamond-rings well displayed as she recounted the diseases she had enjoyed, and did the honors of a remarkable work-basket, containing eight different sorts of scissors.

"We shall be in to-morrow, so you'd better be digging up the treasures you have buried, you old magpie," said Mat, appearing to the pensive Livy on the eleventh day.

"The sun is out, come on deck, and help us get up the last edition of our paper. How will this do? Query — If steamers are named the 'Asia,' the 'Russia,' and the 'Scotia,' why not call one the 'Nausea?'" added Amanda, popping her head into the den. Lavinia threw a pillow at her, but the undaunted joker continued, —

"Also this: Financial — This being a feminine paper, gold is no longer at Pa, but at Ma."

"Good! Add this: Argument in favor of the Superiority of Women — The sluggard was *not* told to go to his uncle."

"Thank you," and Amanda departed to twine with her forty-third bosom friend, while Lavinia disinterred, from holes and corners of her berth, money, nuts, and raisins; books, biscuits, and literary efforts much the worse for deluges of soup and daubs of butter.

The cry of "Land!" on the morrow caused passengers unseen before to appear like worms after a

shower; all heroically did up their back hair, put on their best suits, and walked forth with the delusive hope that no one would know how ill they had been.

A French Marquis with a sickly little son, whose diet of fried potatoes and sour wine perhaps accounted for his having the temper of a young fiend, appeared, and were made much of by dear, title-loving Americans.

A Spanish opera singer, stout, saffron-colored, and imperious, likewise emerged from obscurity, with a meek little husband, who waited on her like a servant, and a big, bald parrot who swore like a trooper.

Several nuns languished in corners of the saloon, surveying the vanities of life with interest, and telling their beads devoutly when they saw any one looking at them.

A mysterious lady in green velvet with many diamonds, and a shabby, speechless companion, sailed about the ship, regardless of the rumors told of her, — deserted husbands, stolen jewelry, lovers waiting on the other side, and many equally pleasant little tales.

The gentlemen with orange gloves and copper-

colored noses got themselves up in the most superb style, though few were going to land at Brest, and took tender farewells of such ladies as did, each professing desolation and despair at the termination of a twelve days' flirtation.

"I am not fond of dirt, but I could kneel down and kiss this mud, so grateful am I to feel solid ground under my feet, after leading the life of a fly for so long," said Lavinia with emotion, as the three trudged up the wharf at Brest into a sort of barn which served for a custom-house.

"Now let each sit upon her luggage and clamor till some one comes and examines it, else it will get whisked away heaven only knows where," ordered Amanda, who was the leader in right of her knowledge of tongues.

Each perched accordingly on her one big trunk, and tried to "clamor." But nothing came of it save loss of time and temper, for no one paid the slightest heed to them; and it was maddening to see trunk after trunk passed and sent off followed by its rejoicing owner. Especially hard to bear was the sight of the green-velvet sinner, who with a smile or two won the sternest official to pass her five trunks

without turning a key, and sailed away with a scornful glance at the virtuous Three planted on their property and feebly beckoning for help.

"I shall bear this no longer. Mat, sit there and guard the small things, while you and I, Livy, charge boldly among these imbeciles and drag them to their duty," and Amanda marched away to clutch a cockaded victim by the shoulder with an awe-inspiring countenance.

Lavinia picked out a feeble, gray officer, and dogged him like an Indian, smiling affably, and pointing to her luggage with a persistent mildness that nearly drove the poor man mad.

No matter where he went, or what he did, no matter how thick the crowd about him, or how loud the din, still, like a relentless ghost, that mild, old lady was ever at his side, mutely pointing and affably smiling. Of course he gave in, lifted one tray, saw much flannel, nearly blew his venerable nose off sniffing at one suspicious bottle, and slamming down the lid scrawled a mysterious cross, bowed and fled.

Proudly returning to Amanda, the victorious one found her friend in a high state of indignation; for no officer there would touch her trunk because some

American Express had put little leaden stamps here and there for some unknown purpose. Not even in her best French could the irate lady make the thick-headed men understand that it was not a high crime against the nation to undo a strap till some superior officer arrived to take the responsibility of so rash a step.

If they had comprehended the dire threats, the personal remarks, and unmitigated scorn of those three fair travellers, the blue-coated imbeciles would have been reduced to submission. Fortunately the great man came in time to save them from utter rout; for the ladies were just trying to decide whether to go and leave the luggage to its fate, or to haul it forth and depart *vi et armis*, when a stout old party came, saw, said, "It is nothing; pass the trunk; a thousand pardons, Madame," and peace was restored.

Instantly the porters, who till then had stood back, eying the innocent, black ark as if it was an infernal machine liable to explode at a touch, threw themselves upon it, bore it forth, and heaving it atop of an omnibus returned to demand vast sums for having waited so long.

Then was Amanda sublime, then did her comrades for the first time learn the magnitude of her powers, and realize the treasure they possessed. Stowing Matilda and the smaller traps in the bus, and saying to Lavinia, "Stand by me," this dauntless maid faced one dozen blue-bloused, black-bearded, vociferous, demonstrative Frenchmen, and, calmly offering the proper sum, refused to add one *sou* more.

Vainly the drivers perjured themselves in behalf of the porters, vainly the guard looked on with imposing uniforms and impertinent observations, vainly Mat cried imploringly, "Pay any thing and let us get off before there is a mob," still the indomitable Amanda held forth the honest franc, and, when no one would take it, laid it on a post, and entering the omnibus drove calmly away.

"What should we do without you?" sighed Lavinia with fervent gratitude.

"Be cheated right and left, and never know it, dear," responded Amanda, preparing for another fight with the omnibus driver.

And she had it; for, unwarned by the fate of the porters, this short-sighted man insisted on carrying the ladies to a dirty little hotel to dine, though

expressly ordered to go at once to the station. Nothing would induce them to alight, though the landlord came out in person and begged them to do so; and, after a protracted struggle and a drive all over the town, they finally reached the depot.

Here another demand for double fare was promptly quenched by an appeal to the *chef de station*, who, finding that Mademoiselle was wide awake, crushed the driver and saw justice done.

Exhausted but triumphant, the three at length found themselves rolling slowly toward Morlaix through a green and blooming country, so unlike the New England spring they had left behind that they rejoiced like butterflies in the sunshine.

II.

BRITTANY.

AFTER a late dinner, at which their appetites were pretty effectually taken away by seeing dishes of snails passed round and eaten like nuts, with large pins to pick out the squirming meat; a night's rest somewhat disturbed by the incessant clatter of *sabots* in the market-place, and a breakfast rendered merry by being served by a *garçon* whom Dickens would have immortalized, our travellers went on to Caulnes-Dinan.

Here began their adventures, properly speaking. They were obliged to drive fourteen miles to Dinan in a ram-shackle carriage drawn by three fierce little horses, with their tails done up in braided *chignons*, and driven by a humpback. This elegant equipage was likewise occupied by a sleepy old priest, who smoked his pipe without stopping the whole way. Also by a large, loquacious, beery man, who talked incessantly, informing the company that he was a

friend of Victor Hugo, a child of nature aged sixty, and obliged to drink much ale because it went to his head and gave him commercial ideas.

If it had given him no others it would have done well; but, after each draught, and he took many, this child of nature became so friendly that even the free and easy Americans were abashed. Matilda quailed before the languishing glances he gave her, and tied her head up like a bundle in a thick veil. The scandalized Lavinia, informing him that she did not understand French, assumed the demeanor of a griffin, and glared stonily into space, when she was not dislocating her neck trying to see if the top-heavy luggage had not tumbled off behind.

Poor Amanda was thus left a prey to the beery one; for, having at first courteously responded to his paternal remarks and expressed an interest in the state of France, she could not drop the conversation all at once, even when the friend of Victor Hugo became so disagreeable that it is to be hoped the poet has not many such. He recited poems, he sung songs, he made tender confidences, and finished by pressing the hand of Mademoiselle to his lips. On being told that such demonstrations were not

permitted to strangers in America, he beat his breast and cried out, "My God, so beautiful and so cold! you do not comprehend that I am but a child. Pardon, and smile again I conjure you."

But Mademoiselle would not smile, and folding her hands in her cloak appeared to slumber. Whereat the gray-headed infant groaned pathetically, cast his eyes heavenward, and drank more ale, muttering to himself and shaking his head as if his emotions could not be entirely suppressed.

These proceedings caused Lavinia to keep her eye on him, being prepared for any outbreak from a bullet all round to proposals to both her charges at once.

With this smouldering bomb-shell inside, and the firm conviction that one if not all the trunks were lying in the dust some miles behind, it may be inferred that duenna Livy did not enjoy that break-neck drive, lurching and bumping up hill and down, with nothing between them and destruction apparently but the little humpback, who drove recklessly.

In this style they rattled up to the Porte de Brest, feeling that they had reached Dinan "only by the grace of God," as the beery man expressed it, when

he bowed and vanished, still oppressed with the gloomy discovery that American women did not appreciate him.

While Amanda made inquiries at an office, and Matilda had raptures over the massive archway crowned with yellow flowers, Lavinia was edified by a new example of woman's right to labor.

Close by was a clean, rosy old woman whose unusual occupation attracted our spinster's attention. Whisking off the wheels of a *diligence*, the old lady greased them one by one, and put them on again with the skill and speed of a regular blacksmith, and then began to pile many parcels into a *char* apparently waiting for them.

She was a brisk, cheery, old soul with the color of a winter-apple in her face, plenty of fire in her quick black eyes and a mouthful of fine teeth, though she must have been sixty. She was dressed in the costume of the place: a linen cap with several sharp gables to it, a gay kerchief over her shoulders, a blue woollen gown short enough to display a pair of sturdy feet and legs in neat shoes with bunches of ribbon on the instep, and black hose. A gray apron with pockets and a bib finished her off,

making a very sensible as well as picturesque costume.

She was still hard at it when a big boy appeared and began to heave the trunks into another *char;* but gave out at the second, which was large. Instantly the brisk old woman put him aside, hoisted in the big boxes without help, and, catching up the shafts of the heavily laden cart, trotted away with it at a pace which caused the Americans (who prided themselves on their muscle) to stare after her in blank amazement.

When next seen, she was toiling up a steep street, still ahead of the lazy boy, who slowly followed with the lighter load. It did not suit Lavinia's ideas of the fitness of things to have an old woman trundle three heavy trunks while she herself carried nothing but a parasol, and she would certainly have lent a hand if the vigorous creature had not gone at such a pace that it was impossible to overtake her till she backed her cart up before a door in most scientific style, and with a bow, a smile, and a courteous wave of the hand, informed them that "here the ladies would behold the excellent Madame C."

They did behold and also receive a most cordial

welcome from the good lady, who not only embraced them with effusion, but turned her house upside-down for their accommodation, merely because they came recommended to her hospitality by a former lodger who had won her kind old heart.

While she purred over them, the luggage was being bumped upstairs, the old woman shouldering trunk after trunk, and trudging up two steep flights in the most marvellous way. But best of all was her surprise and gratitude on receiving a larger fee than usual, for the ladies were much interested in this dear old Hercules in a cap of seven gables.

When she had blessed them all round, and trotted briskly away with her carts, Madame C. informed the new-comers that the worthy soul was a widow with many children, whom she brought up excellently, supporting them by acting as porter at the hotel. Her strength was wonderful, and she was very proud of it, — finding no work too hard, yet always neat, cheery, and active; asking no help, and literally earning her daily bread by the sweat of her brow. The ladies often saw her afterward, always trotting and tugging, smiling and content, as if some unseen hand kept well greased the wheels of

her own diligence, which carried such a heavy load and never broke down.

Miss Lavinia being interested in Woman's Rights and Wrongs was much impressed by the new revelations of the capabilities of her sex, and soon ceased to be surprised at any demonstration of feminine strength, skill, and independence, for everywhere the women took the lead.

They not only kept house, reared children, and knit every imaginable garment the human frame can wear, but kept the shops and the markets, tilled the gardens, cleaned the streets, and bought and sold cattle, leaving the men free to enjoy the only pursuits they seemed inclined to follow, — breaking horses, mending roads, and getting drunk.

The markets seemed entirely in the hands of the women, and lively scenes they presented to unaccustomed eyes, especially the pig-market, held every week, in the square before Madame C.'s house. At dawn the squealing began, and was kept up till sunset. The carts came in from all the neighboring hamlets, with tubs full of infant pigs, over which the women watched with maternal care till they were safely deposited among the rows of tubs that stood

along the walk facing Anne of Bretaigne's gray old tower, and the pleasant promenade which was once the *fosse* about the city walls.

Here Madame would seat herself and knit briskly till a purchaser applied, when she would drop her work, dive among the pink innocents, and hold one up by its unhappy leg, undisturbed by its doleful cries, while she settled its price with a blue-gowned, white-capped neighbor as sharp-witted and shrill-tongued as herself. If the bargain was struck, they slapped their hands together in a peculiar way, and the new owner clapped her purchase into a meal-bag, slung it over her shoulder, and departed with her squirming, squealing treasure as calmly as a Boston lady with a satchel full of ribbons and gloves.

More mature pigs came to market on their own legs, and very long, feeble legs they were, for a more unsightly beast than a Breton pig was never seen out of a toy Noah's ark. Tall, thin, high-backed, and sharp-nosed, these porcine victims tottered to their doom, with dismal wailings, and not a vestige of spirit till the trials and excitement of the day goaded them to rebellion, when their antics furnished fun for the public. Miss Livy observed that the women

could manage the pigs when men failed entirely. The latter hustled, lugged, or lashed, unmercifully and unsuccessfully; the former, with that fine tact which helps them to lead nobler animals than pigs, would soothe, sympathize, coax, and gently beguile the poor beasts, or devise ways of mitigating their bewilderment and woe, which did honor to the sex, and triumphantly illustrated the power of moral suasion.

One amiable lady, who had purchased two small pigs and a coop full of fowls, attempted to carry them all on one donkey. But the piggies rebelled lustily in the bags, the ducks remonstrated against their unquiet neighbors, and the donkey indignantly refused to stir a step till the unseemly uproar was calmed. But the Bretonne was equal to the occasion; for, after a pause of meditation, she solved the problem by tying the bags round the necks of the pigs, so that they could enjoy the prospect. This appeased them at once, and produced a general lull; for when the pigs stopped squealing, the ducks stopped quacking, the donkey ceased his bray, and the party moved on in dignified silence, with the youthful pigs, one black, one white, serenely regarding life from their bags.

Another time, a woman leading a newly bought cow, came through the square, where the noise alarmed the beast so much that she became unruly, and pranced in a most dangerous manner. Miss Livy hung out of the window, breathless with interest, and ready to fly with brandy and bandages at a minute's notice, for it seemed inevitable that the woman would be tossed up among the lindens before the cow was conquered. The few men who were lounging about, stood with their hands in their pockets, watching the struggle without offering to help, till the cow scooped the lady up on her horns, ready for a toss. Livy shrieked, but Madame just held on, kicking so vigorously that the cow was glad to set her down, when, instead of fainting, she coolly informed the men, who, seeing her danger, had approached, that she "could arrange her cow for herself, and did not want any help," which she proved by tying a big blue handkerchief over the animal's eyes, producing instant docility, and then she was led away by her flushed but triumphant mistress, who calmly settled her cap, and took a pinch of snuff to refresh herself, after a scuffle which would have annihilated most women.

When Madame C.'s wood was put in, the newcomers were interested in watching the job, for it was done in a truly Bretonesque manner. It arrived in several odd carts, each drawn by four great horses, with two men to each team; and as the carts were clumsy, the horses wild, and the men stupid, the square presented a lively spectacle. At one time there were three carts, twelve horses, and six men all in a snarl, while a dozen women stood at their doors and gave advice. One was washing a lettuce, another dressing her baby, a third twirling her distaff, and a fourth with her little bowl of soup, which she ate in public while gesticulating so frantically that her *sabots* clattered on the stones.

The horses had a free fight, and the men swore and shouted in vain, till the lady with the baby suddenly went to the rescue. Planting the naked cherub on the door-step, this energetic matron charged in among the rampant animals, and by some magic touch untangled the teams, quieted the most fractious, a big gray brute prancing like a mad elephant, then returned to her baby, who was placidly eating dirt, and with a polite "*Voila, mes-*

sieurs!" she whipped little Jean into his shirt, while the men sat down to smoke.

It took two deliberate men nearly a week to split the gnarled logs, and one brisk woman carried them into the cellar and piled them neatly. The men stopped about once an hour to smoke, drink cider, or rest. The woman worked steadily from morning till night, only pausing at noon for a bit of bread and the soup good Coste sent out to her. The men got two francs a day, the woman half a franc; and, as nothing was taken out of it for wine or tobacco, her ten cents probably went farther than their forty.

This same capable lady used to come to market with a baby on one arm, a basket of fruit on the other, leading a pig, driving a donkey, and surrounded by sheep, while her head bore a pannier of vegetables, and her hands spun busily with a distaff. How she ever got on with these trifling incumbrances, was a mystery; but there she was, busy, placid, and smiling, in the midst of the crowd, and at night went home with her shopping well content.

The washer-women were among the happiest of these happy souls, and nowhere were seen prettier pictures than they made, clustered round the foun-

tains or tanks by the way, scrubbing, slapping, singing, and gossiping, as they washed or spread their linen on the green hedges and daisied grass in the bright spring weather. One envied the cheery faces under the queer caps, the stout arms that scrubbed all day, and were not too tired to carry home some chubby Jean or little Marie when night came, and, most of all, the contented hearts in the broad bosoms under the white kerchiefs, for no complaint did one hear from these hard-working, happy women. The same brave spirit seems to possess them now as that which carried them heroically to their fate in the Revolution, when hundreds of mothers and children were shot at Nantes and died without a murmur.

But of all the friends the strangers made among them, they liked old Mère Oudon best, — a shrivelled leaf of a woman, who at ninety-two still supported her old husband of ninety-eight. He was nearly helpless, and lay in bed most of the time, smoking, while she peeled willows at a *sou* a day, trudged up and down with herbs, cresses, or any little thing she could find to sell. Very proud was she of her "master," his great age, his senses still quite perfect, and most of all his strength, for now and then the

old tyrant left his bed to beat her, which token of conjugal regard she seemed to enjoy as a relic of early days, and a proof that he would long be spared to her.

She kept him exquisitely neat, and if any one gave her a plate of food, a little snuff, or any small comfort for her patient old age, she took it straight to the "master," and found a double happiness in giving and seeing him enjoy it.

She had but one eye, her amiable husband having put out the other once on a time as she was leading him home tipsy from market. The kind soul bore no malice, and always made light of it when forced to tell how the affliction befell her.

"My Yvon was so gay in his young days, truly, yes, a fine man, and now most beautiful to see in his clean bed, with the new pipe that Mademoiselle sent him. Come then and behold him, my superb master, who at ninety-eight has still this strength so wonderful."

The ladies never cared to see him more than once, but often met the truly beautiful old wife as she toiled to and fro, finding her faithful love more wonderful than his strength, and feeling sure that when

she lies at last on her "clean bed," some good angel will repay these ninety-two hard years with the youth and beauty, happiness and rest, which nothing can destroy.

Not only did the women manage the affairs of this world, but had more influence than men with the good powers of heaven. A long drought parched France that year, and even fertile Brittany suffered. More than once processions of women, led by priests, poured through the gates to go to the Croix du Saint Esprit and pray for rain.

"Why don't the men go also?" Miss Livy asked.

"Ah! they pray to the Virgin, and she listens best to women," was the answer.

She certainly seemed to do so, for gracious showers soon fell, and the little gardens bloomed freshly where the mother's hard hands had planted cabbages, onions, and potatoes to feed the children through the long winter.

Nor were these the only tasks the women did. The good ladies had a hospital and a neater, cheerier place was never seen; few invalids, but many old people sitting in the sunny gardens, or at work in the clean rooms. La Garaye is in ruins now, but the

memory of its gentle lady still lives, and is preserved in this benevolent institution for the sick, the old and poor.

A school for girls was kept by the good nuns, and the streets at certain hours were full of little damsels, with round caps on their braided hair, queer long gowns of blue, white aprons and handkerchiefs, who went clattering by in their wooden shoes, bobbing little curtsies to their friends, and readily answering any questions inquisitive strangers asked them. They learned to read, write, sew, and say the catechism. Also to sing, for, often as the ladies passed the little chapel of Our Lady, a chorus of sweet young voices came to us making the flowery garden behind the church of St. Sauveur a favorite resting-place.

In endeavoring to account for the freedom of the women here, it was decided that it was owing to Anne of Brittany, the "gentle and generous Duchesse," to whom her husband Louis XII. allowed the uncontrolled government of the duchy. Relics of the "*fière Bretonne*," as Louis called her, are still treasured everywhere, and it was pleasant to know not only that she was an accomplished woman,

writing tender letters in Latin verse to her husband, but also a wise and just Princess to her people, "showing herself by spirit and independence to be the most worthy of all her race to wear the ducal crown." So three cheers for good Duchesse Anne, and long life to the hardy, happy women of Brittany!

While Miss Lavinia was making these observations and moralizing upon them, the younger ladies were enjoying discoveries and experiences more to their tastes.

They had not been in the house half a day before Madame C. informed them that "Mademoiselle, the so charming miss whom they beheld at dinner, was to be married very soon; and they should have the rapture of witnessing a wedding the most beautiful."

They welcomed the prospect with pleasure, for Dinan is not a whirl of gayety at the best of times; and that spring the drought, rumors of war, and fears of small-pox, cast a shadow upon the sunny little town. So they surveyed Mademoiselle Pelagie with interest, and longed to behold the happy man who was to be blessed with the hand of this little,

yellow-faced girl, with red eyes, dirty hands, and a frizzled crop, so like a wig they never could make up their minds that it was not.

Madame, the mamma, a buxom, comely widow, who breakfasted in black moire, with a diadem of glossy braids on her sleek head, and many jet ornaments rattling and glistening about her person, informed them, with voluble affability, of the whole affair.

"My brother, M. le Président, had arranged the marriage. Pelagie was twenty, and beautiful, as you behold. It was time to establish her. *Mon Dieu!* yes; though my heart is lacerated to lose my angel, I consent. I conduct her to a ball, that she may be seen by the young man whose parents desire that he should espouse my infant. He beholds her. He says: 'Great heavens, I adore her! My father, I consent.' He is presented to me; we converse. She regards him with the angelic modesty of a young girl, but speaks not. I approve, the parents meet, it is arranged, and Jules is betrothed to my Pelagie. They have not met since; but next week he comes for the marriage, and he will be permitted to address her in my presence. Ah, yes! your customs are not

as ours, and to us seem of a deplorable freedom. Pardon that I say it."

On inquiring how Pelagie regarded her future lord, they found that she thought very little about him; but was absorbed in her *trousseau*, which she proudly displayed. To those accustomed to see and hear of American outfits, with their lavish profusion and extravagant elegance, poor little Pelagie's modest stores were not at all imposing. Half a dozen pretty dresses from Paris; several amazing hats, all rosebuds, lace, and blue ribbon; a good deal of embroidery; and a few prophetic caps, — completed the outfit.

One treasure, however, she was never tired of displaying, — a gift from Jules, — a camels'-hair shawl, in a black walnut case, on which was carved the Clomadoc arms. A set of pearls were also from the bridegroom; but the shawl was her pride, for married women alone could wear such, and she seemed to think this right of more importance than any the wedding-ring could confer upon her.

To the young ladies, both of whom had known many of the romantic experiences which befall comely American girls, the idea of marrying a man

whom they had only seen twice seemed horrible; and to have but one week of courtship, and that in Mamma's presence, was simply an insult and a wrong which they would not bear to think of.

But Pelagie seemed quite content, and brooded over her finery like a true Frenchwoman, showing very little interest in her Jules, and only anxious for the time to come when she could wear her shawl and be addressed as madame.

While waiting for the grand event, the girls amused themselves with Gaston, the brother of the bride-elect. He was a languid, good-looking youth of three and twenty, who assumed *blasé* airs and attitudinized for their benefit. Sometimes he was lost in fits of Byronic gloom, when he frowned over his coffee, sighed gustily, and clutched his brow, regardless of the curls, usually in ambrosial order. The damsels, instead of being impressed by this display of inward agony, only laughed at him, and soon rallied him out of his heroics. Then he would try another plan, and become all devotion, presenting green tulips, ancient coins, early fruit, or sketches of his own, so very small that the design was quite obscure. If these delicate attentions failed to touch

the stony hearts of the blonde Americans, he would air his entire wardrobe, appearing before them one day in full Breton costume of white cloth, embroidered in gay silks, buckled shoes, and hat adorned with streaming ribbons and flowers. Quite Arcadian was Gaston in this attire; and very effective on the croquet ground, where sundry English families disported themselves on certain afternoons. Another time he would get himself up like a Parisian dandy bound for a ride in the Bois de Boulogne; and, mounting with much difficulty a rampant horse, he would caracole about the Place St. Louis, to the great delight of the natives.

But this proved a failure; for one of the fair but cruel strangers donned hat and habit, and entirely eclipsed his glories by galloping about the country like an Amazon. The only time Gaston played escort she was nearly the death of him, for he seldom did more than amble a mile or two, and a hard trot of some six or eight miles reduced our Adonis to such a state of exhaustion that he fell into his mother's arms on dismounting, and was borne away to bed with much lamentation.

After that he contented himself with coming to

show himself in full dress whenever he went to a party; and, as that was nearly every other evening, they soon got accustomed to hearing a tap at their door, and beholding the comely youth in all the bravery of glossy broadcloth, a lavish shirt-bosom, miraculous tie, primrose gloves, varnished shoes, and curls and mustache anointed and perfumed in the most exquisite style. He would bow and say "*Bon soir*," then stand to be admired, with the artless satisfaction of a child; after which he would smile complacently, wave his crush hat, and depart with a flourish.

Dear, dandified, vain Gaston. His great desire was to go to Paris, and when the war came he had his wish; but found sterner work to do than to dress and dance and languish at the feet of ladies. I hope it made a man of him, and fancy it did; for the French fight well and suffer bravely for the country they love in their melodramatic fashion.

As the day approached for the advent of the bridegroom, great excitement prevailed in the quiet household. Madame C. and her handmaid, dear old Marie, cackled and bustled like a pair of important hens. Madame F., the widow, lived at the

milliner's, so to speak, and had several dress rehearsals for her own satisfaction. Gaston mounted guard over his sister, lest some enamoured man should rend her from them ere her Jules could secure the prize. And Pelagie placidly ate and slept, kept her hair in crimping-pins from morning till night, wore out her old clothes, and wiled away the time, munching *bonbons* and displaying her shawl.

"Mercy on us! I should feel like a lamb being fattened for the sacrifice if I were in her place," cried one of the freeborn American citizenesses, with an air of unmitigated scorn for French ways of conducting this interesting ceremony.

"I should feel like a galley-slave," said the other. "For she can't go anywhere without Gaston or Mamma at her elbow. Only yesterday she went into a shop alone, while Gaston waited at the door. And when she told it at home as a great exploit all the ladies shrieked with horror at the idea, and Mamma said, wringing her hands: '*Mon Dieu!* but they will think thou art a married woman, for it is inconceivable that any girl should do so bold a thing.' And Pelagie wept, and implored them not to tell Jules, lest he should discard her."

Here the Americans all groaned over the pathetic absurdity of the whole affair, and wondered with unrighteous glee what the decorous ladies below would say to some of their pranks at home. But, fearing that M. le Président might feel it his duty to eject them from the town as dangerous persons, they shrouded their past sins in the most discreet silence, and assumed their primmest demeanor in public.

"He has come! Look quick, girls!" cried Lavinia, as a carriage stopped at the door, and a rushing sound, as of many agitated skirts, was heard in the hall. Three heads peeped from the window of the blue parlor, and three pairs of curious eyes were rewarded by a sight of the bridegroom, as he alighted.

Such a little man! Such a fierce mustache! Such a dignified strut! And such an imposing uniform as he wore! For Jules Gustave Adolphe Marie Clomadoc was a colonel in some regiment stationed at Boulogne. Out he skipped; in he marched; and, peeping over the banisters, they saw him salute Madame F. with a stately kiss on the hand, then escort her up to her *salon*, bowing loftily

and twisting his tawny mustache with an air that gave him the effect of being six feet in height and broad in proportion.

How he greeted his *fiancée* they knew not, but the murmur of voices came from the room in steady flow for hours, and Gaston flew in and out with an air of immense importance.

At dinner the strangers were proudly presented to M. le Colonel, and received affable bows from the little man, who flattered himself that he could talk English, and insisted on speaking an unknown tongue, evidently wondering at their stupidity in not understanding their own language.

He escorted Madame down, sat between her and Pelagie, but talked only to her; while the girl sat silent and ate her dinner with an appetite which no emotion could diminish. It was very funny to see the small warrior do his wooing of the daughter through the mother; and the buxom widow played her part so well that an unenlightened observer would have said *she* was the bride-elect. She smiled, she sighed, she discoursed, she coquetted, and now and then plucked out her handkerchief and wept at the thought of losing the angel, who was

placidly gnawing bones and wiping up the gravy on her plate with bits of bread.

Jules responded with spirit, talked, jested, quoted poetry, paid compliments right and left, and now and then passed the salt, filled a glass, or offered a napkin to his *fiancée* with a French shrug and a tender glance.

After dinner Madame F. begged him to recite one of his poems; for it appeared this all-accomplished man was beloved of the muse, and twanged the lyre as well as wielded the sword. With much persuasion and many modest apologies, Jules at length consented, took his place upon the rug, thrust one hand into his bosom, turned up his eyes, and, in a tremendous voice, declaimed a pensive poem of some twenty stanzas, called, "Adieu to my past."

The poet's friends listened with rapt countenances and frequent bursts of emotion or applause; but the Americans suffered agonies, for the whole thing was so absurdly melodramatic that it was with great difficulty they kept themselves from explosions of laughter. When the little man dropped his voice to a hoarse whisper, in bidding adieu to the lost loves of his youth, tender-hearted

old C. sobbed in her napkin; while Livy only saved herself from hysterics, by drinking a glass of water, and Pelagie ate sugar, with her round eyes fixed on her lover's face, without the slightest expression whatever.

When the poet mourned his blighted hopes, and asked wildly of all the elements if he should live or die, Gaston cast reproachful glances at the alien charmer, who had nipped his passion in the bud; and when Jules gave a sudden start, slapped his brow, and declared that he would live for his country, old Marie choked in her coffee, while Madame F. clapped her fat hands, and cried: "It is sublime!"

The poem closed there, and the providential appearance of their donkeys gave the ladies an excuse for retiring to their room, where they laughed till they could laugh no more.

Each meal was as good as a play, and every glimpse they had of the little pair gave fresh food for mirth. Every thing was so formal and polite, so utterly unlike the free-and-easy customs of their native land, that they were kept in alternate states of indignation and amusement the whole time.

Jules never was alone with his Pelagie for an instant; such a breach of etiquette would have shocked the entire town. In the walks and drives which the family took together, Madame was always at the Colonel's side; while Gaston escorted his sister, looking as if he was fast reaching a state of mind when he would give her away without a pang. Many guests came and went, much kissing and bowing, prancing and rustling, went on, up and down stairs. Stately old gentlemen called, papers were signed, fortunes discussed, and gifts displayed. Pelagie went much to mass; also to the barber's, and the bath. Agitated milliners flew in and out. A great load of trunks arrived from Nantes, where Madame formerly lived; and the day before the wedding a whole carriage full of Clomadocs appeared, and Babel seemed to have come again.

A great supper was given that evening, and the three were banished to their own rooms; where, however, they fared sumptuously, for Madame C. and good old Marie ate with them, having no place left them but the kitchen. Madame C. was much hurt that she had not been asked to the wedding. It seemed the least Madame F. could do after taking

possession of the house, and turning its rightful owner out of every room but the attic. Madame C. was a gentlewoman; and, though a meek old soul, this rudeness hurt her very much. She said nothing; but Marie fumed and scolded fiercely, and proposed that the neglected ones should all go away on the wedding-day, and make a *fête* for themselves somewhere. So they decided to drive to Dinare, enjoy the fine views of the sea and St. Malo, dine, and return at dusk, leaving the house free for the wedding festivities.

The day was fine, and the ladies were graciously invited to behold the bride before she left for church. She looked as much like a fashion-plate as it was possible for a living girl to look; and they dutifully kissed her on both cheeks, paid their compliments, and retired, thanking their stars that they were not in her place.

Mamma was gorgeous to behold, in royal purple and black lace. Gaston was so glossy and beruffled and begemmed, that they gazed with awe upon the French Adonis. But the bridegroom was a sight for gods and men. In full regimentals with a big sword, so many orders that there was hardly room

for them on his little breast, and a cocked hat, with a forest of feathers, in which he extinguished himself at intervals. How his tiny boots shone, his tawny mustache bristled with importance, and his golden epaulettes glittered as he shrugged and pranced! His honored papa and mamma were both tall, portly people, beside whom the manikin looked like a child. Livy quite longed to see Madame Clomadoc take little Jules on her knee, and amuse him with *bonbons* when he got impatient at the delay of the carriage.

The three peeped out of windows, and over the banisters, and got fine glimpses of the splendors below. Flocks of elegant ladies went sailing up the narrow stairs. Gentlemen with orders, dandies wonderful to behold, and a few children (to play with the bridegroom, as Livy wickedly said), adorned the hall and *salon.* Every one talked at the top of his or her voice. Shrieks of rapture, groans of despair, greeted a fine toilette or a torn glove. Peals of laughter from the gentlemen, and shrill cries from the infants, echoed through the once peaceful halls. As Françoise said, "It was truly divine."

At eleven, every one trooped into the carriages again. How they ever got so many full-dressed people into one carriage is a mystery to this day. But in they piled, regardless of trains, corpulency, or height; and coach after coach lumbered away to the church.

The bride's carriage could not be got very near the door. So she tripped out to it, leaning on her uncle's arm, while the devoted Gaston bore her train. Mamma sailed after in a purple cloud; and when two young damsels, in arsenic green, were packed in, away they went, leaving the bridegroom to follow.

Then came the catastrophe! Stout papa and mamma were safely in; a friend of Jules, some six feet high, shut himself up like a jack-knife; and, with a farewell wave of the cocked hat, the small bridegroom skipped in after them. The coachman cracked his whip, intending to dash under the arched gateway in fine style. But alas! the harness was old, the big horses clumsy, and the road half paved. The traces gave way, the beasts reared, the big coach lurched, and dismal wails arose. Out burst the fierce little hero of the day, and the tall friend followed by instalments.

Great was the excitement as the natives gathered about the carriage with offers of help, murmurs of sympathy, and unseemly mirth on the part of the boys. Jules did the swearing; and never were heard such big oaths as fell from the lips of this irate little man. It really seemed as if he would explode with wrath. He dashed the impressive cocked hat upon the stones, laid his hand upon his sword, tore his hair, and clutched his mustache in paroxysms of despair.

His bride was gone, waiting in agitated suspense for him. No other coach could be had, as the resources of the town had been exhausted. The harness was in a desperate state, the men at their wit's end how to mend it, and time flying fast. *Maire* and priest were waiting, the whole effect of the wedding was being ruined by this delay, and "ten thousand devils" seemed to possess the awkward coachman.

During the flurry, Papa Clomadoc appeared to slumber tranquilly in the recesses of the carriage. Mamma endeavored to soothe her boy with cries of "Tranquillize yourself, my cherished son. It is nothing." "Come, then, and reassure papa." "In-

hale the odor of my vinaigrette. It will compose your lacerated nerves, my angel."

But the angel wouldn't come, and continued to dance and swear, and slap his hat about until the damages were repaired, when he flung himself, exhausted, into the carriage, and was borne away to his bride.

"A lively prospect for poor Pelagie." "What a little fiend he is!" "Spinsters for ever!"

With these remarks, the ladies ordered their own equipage, an infant omnibus, much in vogue in Dinan, where retired army officers, English or Scotch, drive about with their little families of eighteen or twenty. One Colonel Newcome, a grave-looking man, used to come to church in a bus of this sort, with nine daughters and four sons, like a patriarch. The strangers thought it was a boarding-school, till he presented the entire flock, with paternal pride, as "my treasures."

Madame C., in a large Leghorn bonnet, trembling with yellow bows, led the way with an air of lofty indifference as to what became of her house that day. Marie bore a big basket, full of cold fowls, salad, and wines; she also was in a new, spring hat

of purple, which made her rosy old face look like a china aster. Lavinia reposed upon the other seat; and the infants insisted on sharing the driver's seat, up aloft, that they might enjoy the prospect, which freak caused Flabeau's boy to beam and blush till his youthful countenance was a deep scarlet.

They had a pleasant day; for good old Madame soon recovered her temper, and beguiled the time with lively tales of her mother's trials during the Revolution.

Marie concocted spiced drinks, salad that was a thing to dream of, not to tell, and produced such edible treasures that her big basket seemed bottomless.

The frisky damsels explored ruins, ran races on the hard beach, sniffed the salt breezes, and astonished the natives by swarming up and down "precipices," as they called the rocks.

That was a fatal day for Flabeau's boy (they never knew his name); for, as if the wedding had flown to his head, he lost his youthful heart to one of the lively damsels who invaded his perch. Such tender glances as his China-blue eyes cast upon her; such grins of joy as he gave when she spoke to him;

such feats of agility as he performed, leaping down to gather flowers, or hurling himself over thorny hedges, to point out a *dolmen* or a *menhir* (they never could remember which was which). Alas, alas! for Flabeau's boy! Deeply was he wounded that day by the unconscious charmer, who would as soon have thought of inspiring love in the bosom of the broken-nosed saint by the wayside as in the heart that beat under the blue blouse.

I regret to say that "the infants," as Madame C. always called Miss Livy's charges, behaved themselves with less decorum than could have been wished. But the proud consciousness that *they* never could be disposed of as Pelagie had been had such an exhilarating effect upon them that they frisked like the lambs in the field.

One drove the bus in a retired spot and astonished the stout horses, by the way in which she bowled them along the fine, hard road. The other sang college songs, to the intense delight of the old ladies, who admired the "*chants Amériques* so gay," and to the horror of their duenna, who knew what they meant. A shower came up, and they *would* remain outside; so the boy put up a leathern hood,

and they sat inside in such a merry mood that the silent youth suddenly caught the infection, and burst forth into a Breton melody, which he continued to drone till they got home.

The house was a blaze of light when they arrived, and Françoise, the maid, came flying out to report sundry breakages and mishaps. How the salad had precipitated itself downstairs, dish and all. How Monsieur Gaston was so gay, so inconceivably gay, that he could hardly stand, and insisted on kissing her clandestinely. That Mademoiselle Pelagie had wept much because her veil was torn; and Madame F. had made a fresh toilette, ravishing to behold. Would the dear ladies survey the party, still at table? Regard them from the little window in the garden, and see if it is not truly a spectacle the most superb!

They did regard them, and saw the bride at the head of the table, eating steadily through the dessert; the bridegroom reciting poems with tremendous effect; Gaston almost invisible behind a barricade of bottles; and Madame F., in violet velvet, diamonds, plumes, and lace, more sleek and buxom than ever. The ladies all talked at once,

and the gentlemen drank healths every five minutes. A very French and festive scene it was; for the room was small, and twenty mortals were stowed therein. One fat lady sat in the fireplace, Papa Clomadoc leaned his heavy head upon the sideboard, and the plump shoulders of Madame F. were half out of the front window. "But it was genteel. Oh! I assure you, yes," as Françoise said.

How long they kept it up the weary trio did not wait to see; but retired to their beds, and slumbered peacefully, waking only when Gaston was borne up to his room, chanting the "Marseillaise" at the top of his voice.

Next day M. and Madame Clomadoc, Jr., made calls, and Pelagie had the joy of wearing her shawl. For three days she astonished the natives by promenading with her lord in a fresh toilette each day. On the fourth they all piled into a big carriage, and went away to make a round of visits, before the young people settled down at Boulogne.

The Americans never thought to hear any more of Pelagie; but, as dear old Madame C. wrote to them several times after they left, the little story

may be finished here, though the sequel did not actually come till a year later.

Many were the sage predictions of the three, as to the success of this marriage. Amanda approving of that style of thing, Matilda objecting fiercely to the entire affair, and Lavinia firmly believing in the good old doctrine of love, as your only firm basis for so solemn a bargain.

Wagers were laid that the fiery little colonel would shoot some one in a jealous fit, or that Pelagie would elope, or both charcoal themselves to death, as the best way out of the predicament. But none of them guessed how tragically it would really end.

Late in the following spring came a letter from Madame C., telling them that Jules had gone to the war, and been shot in his first battle; that Pelagie was with her mother again, comforting herself for her loss with a still smaller Jules, who never saw his father, and, it is to be hoped, did not resemble him. So little Pelagie's brief romance ended; and one would fancy that the experiences of that year would make her quite content to remain under mamma's wing, with no lord and master but

the little son, to whom she was a very tender mother.

Pleasant days those were in quaint old Dinan; for spring's soft magic glorified earth and sky, and a delicious sense of rest and freedom gave a charm to that quiet life. Legends of romance and chivalry hung about the ruins of castle and *château*, as green and golden as the ivy and bright wall-flowers that tapestried the crumbling walls, and waved like banners from the turret tops. Lovely walks into woods, starred with pale primroses, and fragrant with wild hyacinths; down green lanes, leading to quaint cottages, or over wide meadows full of pink-tipped daisies, and dear familiar buttercups, the same all the world over.

Sometimes they took gay donkey-drives to visit a solemn dolmen in a gloomy pine-wood, with mistletoe hanging from the trees, and the ghosts of ancient Druids haunting the spot. The cavalcade on such occasions was an imposing spectacle. Matilda being fond of horses likewise affected donkeys (or thought she did, till she tried to drive one), and usually went first in a small vehicle like a chair on wheels, drawn by an animal who looked about the

size of a mouse, when the stately Mat in full array, yellow parasol, long whip, camp-stool, and sketch-book, sat bolt upright on her perch, driving in the most approved manner.

The small beast, after much whipping, would break into a trot, and go pattering over the hard, white road, with his long ears wagging, and his tiny hoofs raising a great dust for the benefit of the other turnout just behind.

In a double chair sat Lavinia, bundled up as usual, and the amiable Amanda, both flushed with constant pokings and thrashings of their steed. A venerable ass, so like an old whity-brown hair trunk as to his body, and Nick Bottom's mask as to his head, that he was a constant source of mirth to the ladies. Mild and venerable as he looked, however, he was a most incorrigible beast, and it took two immortal souls, and four arms, to get the ancient donkey along.

Vain all the appeals to his conscience, pity, or pride: nothing but a sharp poke among his ribs, a steady shower of blows on his fuzzy old back, and frequent "yanks" of the reins produced any effect. It was impossible to turn out for any thing, and the ladies

resigned themselves to the ignominy of sitting still, in the middle of the road, and letting other carriages drive over or round them.

On rare occasions the beast would bolt into the ditch as a vehicle drew near; but usually he paused abruptly, put his head down, and apparently went to sleep.

Matilda got on better, because little Bernard Du Guesclin, as she named her mouse, was so very small, that she could take him up, and turn him round bodily, when other means failed, or pull him half into the chair if danger threatened in front. He was a sprightly little fellow, and had not yet lost all the ardor of youth, or developed the fiendish obstinacy of his kind; so he frequently ran little races; now and then pranced, and was not quite dead to the emotion of gratitude in return for bits of bread.

Truly, yes; the fair Mat with her five feet seven inches, and little Bernard, whose longest ear, when most erect, did not reach much above her waist, were a sweet pair of friends, and caused her mates great amusement.

"I must have some one to play with, for I can't

improve my mind *all* the time as 'Mandy does, or cuddle and doze like Livy. I've had experience with young donkeys of all sorts, and I give you my word little Bernie is much better fun than some I've known with shorter ears and fewer legs."

Thus Matilda, regardless of the jeers of her friends, when they proposed having the small beast into the *salon* to beguile the tedium of a rainy day.

As the summer came on, picnics were introduced, and gay parties would pile into and on to Flabeau's small omnibus, and drive off to Hunandaye, Coétquën, La Belliere, Guingamp, or some other unpronounceable but most charming spot, for a day of sunshine and merry-making.

The hospitable English came out strong on these occasions, with "'ampers of 'am-sandwiches, bottled porter and so on, don't you know?" all in fine style. Even the stout doctor donned his knickerbockers and gray hose, unfurled his Japanese umbrella, and, with a pretty niece on either arm, disported himself like a boy.

But pleasantest of all were the daily strolls through the little town and its environs, getting glimpses of Breton manners and customs.

The houses were usually composed of one room, where, near the open fire, and fixed against the wall, stands the bedstead or *lit clos*, of old oak, shut in by carved sliding panels, often bearing an inscription or some sacred symbol. The mattresses and feather-beds are so piled up, that there is hardly room to creep in. Before it is the big chest containing the family wardrobe, answering the double purpose of a seat and a step by which to ascend the lofty bed. Cupboards on each side often have wide shelves, where the children sleep. Settles and a long table complete the furniture; the latter often has little wells hollowed out in the top to hold the soup instead of plates. Over the table, suspended by pulleys, are two indispensable articles in a Breton house, — a large round basket to cover the bread, and a wooden frame to hold the spoons. Festoons of sausages, hams, candles, onions, horse-shoes, harness, and tools, all hang from the ceiling. The floor is of beaten earth. One narrow window lets in the light. There are no out-houses, and pigs and poultry mingle freely with the family.

The gardens are well kept, and produce quantities of fruit and vegetables. The chief food of the

poorer class is bread or porridge of buckwheat, with cabbage soup, made by pouring hot water over cabbage leaves and adding a bit of butter.

They are a home-loving people, and pine like the Swiss, if forced to leave their native land. They are brave soldiers and good sailors. "Their vices," as a Breton writer says, "are avarice, contempt for women, and drunkenness; their virtues, love of home and country, resignation to the will of God, loyalty to each other, and hospitality." Their motto is, "En tout chemin loyauté."

They are very superstitious, and some of their customs are curious. At New Year pieces of bread and butter are thrown into the fountains, and from the way in which they swim the future is foretold. If the buttered side turns under, it forebodes death; if two pieces adhere together, it is a sign of sickness; and if a piece floats properly, it is an assurance of long life and prosperity.

Girls throw pins into the fountain of Saloun to tell by their manner of sinking, when they will be married. If the pin goes down head-foremost, there is little hope; but, if the point goes first, it is a sure sign of being married that year.

Their veneration for healing-springs is very great, and, though at times forbidden by the Church, is still felt. Pounded snails, worn in a bag on the neck, is believed to be a cure for fever; and a certain holy bell rung over the head, a cure for headache. "If we believed in that last remedy what a ceaseless tingling that bell would keep up in America," said Lavinia, when these facts were mentioned to her.

In some towns they have, in the cemetery, a bone-house or reliquary. It is the custom, after a certain time, to dig up the bones of the dead, and preserve the skulls in little square boxes like bird-houses, with a heart-shaped opening, to show the relic within. The names and dates of the deceased are inscribed outside.

Saint Ives or Yves is the favorite saint, and images of him are in all churches and over many doors. He was one of the remarkable characters of the thirteenth century. He studied law in Paris, and devoted his talents to defending the poor; hence, he was called "the poor man's advocate:" and so great is the confidence placed in his justice, that, even now, when a debtor falsely denies his debt, a

peasant will pay twenty *sous* for a mass to St. Ives, sure that the Saint will cause the faithless creditor to die within the year or pay up.

His truthfulness was such that he was called "St. Yves de verité." He was the special patron of lawyers, but he does not seem to be their model.

The early monks taught the people to work, and their motto was "The Cross and the plough, labor and prayer." They introduced apples, now the principal fruit of Brittany. Much cider is made and drank; and in old times they got their wine from France in exchange for wax and honey, as they were famous bee-keepers. Great fields of buck-wheat still afford food for the "yellow-breeched philosophers," and in many cottage gardens a row of queerly shaped hives stand in sunny nooks.

These monks were the model farmers of those days, and their abbeys were fine farms. One had twenty piggeries, of three hundred pigs each, in its forests. The monks also reared sheep and horses, and bred fish in their ponds.

Many were also brewers, weavers, carpenters, and so on. Evidently they lived up to their motto and

labored quite as much as they prayed, and doubtless were saved by works as well as by faith.

The little Place Du Guesclin, with a stumpy statue of the famous knight in the middle and chestnut trees all around, was a favorite resting-place of the ladies. Especially when the weekly fair was held and booths of all sorts were raised at one end. Here Amanda bought a remarkable jack-knife, which would cut nothing but her fingers: Matilda speculated in curious kinds of cake; one sort being made into gigantic jumbles so light that they did excellently for grace-hoops; another sort being used by these vandals as catch-alls, so deep and tough were they. Lavinia examined the various fabrics, and got bits of linen as samples, also queer earthen pots and pans impossible to carry away.

The church of St. Sauveur, a dim and ancient little place with Du Guesclin's heart buried by the side of his wife, was another haunt. The castle, now a prison, contained the arm-chair in which Duchess Anne sat, and the dungeons where were crammed two thousand English prisoners of war in the last century. The view from the platform of

the keep was magnificent, extending to Mont Dol and the distant sea.

The sunny promenade on the *fosse*, that goes half round the town, was very charming, with the old gray walls on one side, and, on the other, the green valley with its luxuriant gardens, and leafy lanes, winding up to the ruined *château*, or the undulating hills with picturesque windmills whirling on the heights.

On the other side of the town, from the high gardens of the church, one looked down into the deeper valley of the Rance, with the airy viaduct striding from hill to hill, and the old part of the town nestling at its base.

Soft and summery, fertile and reposeful, was the scene; and the busy peasants at their work added to the charm. Pretty English children with Breton nurses, each in the costume of her native town, played under the lindens all abloom with odorous flowers and alive with bees. Workmen came to these green places to eat the black bread and drink the thin wine that was all their dinner. Invalids strolled here after their baths at the little house in the rose-garden below. Pretty girls walked there

in the twilight with long-haired lovers in knee breeches and round hats. Nuns in their gray gowns went to and fro from hospital and the insane asylum or charity school; and the beautiful old priest sometimes went feebly by smiling paternally on his flock, who rose and uncovered reverently as he passed.

Flowers were everywhere, — in the gardens of the rich, at the windows of the poor. The stalls in the market were gay with plumy lilacs, splendid tulips, roses of every shade, and hyacinths heavy with odor. All along the borders of the river waved the blossoming grass; every green bank about the mills at Lehon was yellow with dandelions, and the sunny heads of little children welcoming the flower of the poor. Even the neglected churchyard of the ruined abbey, where the tombs of the stately Beaumanoirs still stand, was bright with cheerful daisies and blue-eyed forget-me-nots.

The willows in the valley were covered with fragrant tassels, and the old women and children sat all day on door-stones and by the wayside stripping the long, white wands for basket-making. Flax fields were blooming in the meadows, and

acres of buckwheat, with its rosy stems and snowy blossoms, whitened the uplands with a fair prophecy of bread for all.

So, garlanded about with early flowers and painted in spring's softest, freshest colors, Brittany remains for ever a pleasant picture in the memory of those who have been welcomed to its hospitable homes, and found friends among its brave and loyal people.

III.

FRANCE.

"GIRLS, I have had a scintillation in the night: listen and approve!" said Amanda, coming into the room where her comrades sat upon the floor, in the first stages of despair, at the impossibility of getting the accumulated rubbish of three months' travel into a couple of immense trunks.

"Blessed girl! you always bring a ray of light just at the darkest moment," returned Lavinia, with a sigh of relief, while Matilda looked over a barricade of sketch-books bristling with paint-brushes, and added anxiously, —

"If you *could* suggest how I am to work this miracle, you will be a public benefactor."

"Behold the amendment I propose," began Amanda, perching herself on one of the arks. "We have decided to travel slowly and comfortably, through France to Switzerland, stopping where we like, and staying as long as we please at any place

we fancy, being as free as air, and having all the world before us where to choose, as it were."

"The route you have laid out is a charming one, and I don't see how you can improve it," said Lavinia, who, though she was supposed to be the matron, guide, and protector of the younger girls, was in reality nothing but a dummy, used for Mrs. Grundy's sake, and let the girls do just as they pleased, only claiming the right to groan and moan as much as she liked when neuralgia, her familiar demon, claimed her for its own.

"One improvement remains to be made. Are these trunks a burden, a vexation of spirit, a curse?" demanded Amanda, tapping one with her carefully cherished finger-tips.

"They are! they are!" groaned the others, regarding the monsters with abhorrence.

"Then let us get rid of them, and set out with no luggage but a few necessaries in a shawl-strap."

"We will! we will!" returned the chorus.

"Shall we burn up our rubbish, or give it away?" asked Lavinia, who liked energetic measures, and was ready to cast her garments to the four winds of heaven, to save herself from the agonies of packing.

"*I* shall never give up my pictures, nor my boots!" cried Matilda, gathering her idols to her breast in a promiscuous heap.

"Be calm and listen," returned the scintillator. "Pack away all but the merest necessaries, and we will send the trunk by express to Lyons. Then with our travelling-bags and bundles, we can follow at our leisure."

"'Tis well! 'tis well!" replied the chorus, and they all returned to their packing, which was performed in the most characteristic manner.

Amanda never seemed to have any clothes, yet was always well and appropriately dressed; so it did not take her long to lay a few garments, a book or two, a box of Roman-coin lockets, scarabæ brooches, and cinque-cento rings, likewise a swell hat and habit, into her vast trunk; then lock and label it in the most business-like and thorough manner.

Matilda found much difficulty in reconciling paint-pots and silk gowns, blue hats and statuary, French boots and Yankee notions. But order was at length produced from chaos, and the young lady refreshed her weary soul by painting large red M's all over the trunk to mark it for her own.

Miss Lavinia packed and repacked four or five times, forgetting needfuls, which, of course, were always at the very bottom. At the fifth plunge into the depths her patience gave out, and with a vow to be a slave no longer to her treacherous memory, she tumbled every thing in, performed a solemn jig on the lid till it locked, then pasted large, but illegible placards in every available spot, and rested from her labors with every nerve in a throbbing condition.

Shawl-straps of the largest, strongest sort were next procured, and the three bundles made up with much discussion and merriment.

Into Amanda's went a volume of Shakspeare of great size and weight, but as indispensable as a tooth-brush to its owner; toilet-articles tied up in a handkerchief, a few necessary garments, and much paper, — for Amanda was inspired with poetic fire at unexpected moments, also had five hundred bosom friends, in answering whose epistolary gushings much stationery was consumed. A pistol, a massive crust of bread, and an oval box containing all the dainty appliances for the culture, preservation, and ornamentation of the finger-nails, made up her store.

Matilda's bundle consisted of sketch-books, a trifle of haberdashery, a curling-stick that was always tumbling out at inopportune moments, yards of blue ribbon, and a camp-stool strapped outside in company with a Japanese umbrella, a gift from the stout doctor, destined to be cursed in many languages by the unhappy beings into whose backs, eyes, and stomachs it was poked before its wanderings ended.

Lavinia confined herself to a choice collection of bottles and pill-boxes, fur boots, a gray cloud, and several French novels, — the solace of wakeful nights. A scarlet army blanket, with U. S. in big black letters on it, enveloped her travelling medicine-chest, and lent a cheerful air to the sombre spinster, whose black attire and hoarse voice made the *sobriquet* of Raven most appropriate.

With these imposing bundles in one hand, little pouches slung over the shoulder, plain travelling-suits, subdued hats, and resolute but benign countenances, our three errant damsels set forth one bright June day, to wander through France at their own sweet will. Not a fear assailed them; for all men were civil, all women friendly, and the world wore its sunniest aspect. Not a doubt perplexed

them; for the gifted Amanda spoke many tongues, understood all sorts of money, could grapple successfully with Murray and Bradshaw, and never got into the wrong corporation when she traced a route with unerring accuracy through the mysteries of an Indicator. No lord and master, in the shape of brother, spouse, or courier, ordered their outgoings and incomings; but liberty the most entire was theirs, and they enjoyed it heartily. Wisely and well too; for, though off the grand route, they behaved themselves in public as decorously as if the eyes of all prim Boston were upon them, and proved by their triumphant success, that the unprotected might go where they liked, if they conducted themselves with the courtesy and discretion of gentlewomen.

How pleasant were the early sail down the Rance from Dinan to St. Malo, the comfortable breakfast in the flowery little court of Hotel Franklin, and the stroll afterward about the quaint old town, looking at the churches, buying fruit, and stoutly resisting the temptations of antique jewelry displayed in the dingy shops! Lavinia never forgave herself, however, for not securing a remarkable watch, and

Amanda sighed months afterward for a Breton collar and cross of charming antiquity and ugliness.

Matilda boldly planted her camp-stool, unfurled her umbrella, and, undaunted by the crowd of round-capped, blue-bloused, wooden-shoed children about her, began to draw the church.

"I intend to study architecture, and to sketch *all* the cathedrals we see," said the ardent art-student, struggling manfully with the unruly umbrella, the unsavory odors from the gutter, and the garrulous crowd leaning over her shoulder, peering under her hat-brim, and examining all her belongings with a confiding freedom rather embarrassing.

"Do you know what impertinent things these little scamps are saying to you?" asked Amanda, pausing in a lecture on surface drainage which she was delivering to Lavinia, who was vainly struggling to cram a fat wine bottle, a cabbage leaf of strawberries, and some remarkable cakes into the lunch-basket.

"No: I don't; and that is the advantage of not knowing any language but my own," complacently replied Matilda, who considered all study but that of art, as time wasted, and made her small store of

French answer admirably, by talking very loud and fast, and saying, "*Oui, oui, oui,*" on all occasions with much gesticulation, and bows and smiles of great suavity and sweetness.

"Clear out this rabble, or come back to the hotel and wait for the bus. We shall have the whole town round us soon, and I can't stand it," said Amanda, who had no romantic admiration for the Great Unwashed.

"You think I can't do it? *Voila!*" and, rising suddenly to an unexpected height, Matilda waved the umbrella like a *bâton*, cried "*Allez!*" in a stern voice, and the children fled like chaff before the wind.

"You see how little is needed, so don't vex me with learning your old verbs any more!" and Matilda closed her book with an air of calm satisfaction.

"Come home and rest. It is so warm here I am fairly melted," prayed Lavinia, who had been longing for summer, and of course, was not suited when she got it.

"Now, do remember one thing: don't let us be gregarious. We never know who we may pick up

if we talk to people; and stray acquaintances are sad bores sometimes. Granny is such a cross old dear she won't say a word to any one if she can help it; but you, Mat, can't be trusted if we meet any one who talks English. So be on your guard, or the peace of this party is lost," said Amanda, impressively.

"We are not likely to meet any but natives in this wilderness; so don't excite yourself, Mandy, dear," replied Matilda, who, being of a social turn and an attractive presence, was continually making friends, to the great annoyance of her more prudent comrades.

In the flowery court-yard sat the group that one meets everywhere on the Continent, — even in the wilds of Brittany. The father and mother stout, tired, and rather subdued by the newness of things; the son, Young America personified, loud, important, and inquisitive; the daughter, pretty, affected, and over-dressed; all on the lookout for adventures and titles, fellow-countrymen to impress, and foreigners eager to get the better of them.

Seeing the peril from afar, Amanda buried herself in Murray, to read up the tomb of Chateau-

briand, the tides, population, and any other useful bit of history; for Amanda was a thrifty soul, and

> "Gathered honey all the day,
> From every opening flower."

Lavinia, finding the court damp, shrouded herself in the gray cloud, put her feet on the red bundle, and fortified herself with a Turner's pill.

But Matilda, guileless girl, roamed to and fro, patted the horses at the gate, picked flowers that no French hand would have dared to touch, and studied the effect of light and shade on the red head of the *garçon*, who gazed sentimentally at "the blonde 'Mees,'" as he artlessly watered the wine for dinner.

The Americans had their eye upon her, and felt that, though the others might be forbidding English women, this one could be made to talk. So they pounced upon their prey, to the dismay of her mates, and proceeded to ask fifty questions to the minute. Poor Mat, glad to hear the sound of her native tongue, fell into the snare, and grew more confiding every moment.

"She is telling the family history," whispered Lavinia, in a tone of despair.

"Now they are asking where we came from," added Amanda, casting down her book in agony.

"Wink at her," sighed Lavinia.

"Call to her," groaned Amanda, as they heard their treasured secret betrayed, and the enemy clamoring for further information about this charming trip.

"Matilda! bring me my shawl," commanded the Dowager.

"Come and see if you don't think we had better go direct to Tours," said the wary Amanda, hoping to put the enemy off the track.

The victim came, and vials of wrath were poured upon her head in one unceasing flow till the omnibus started, and the ladies were appeased by finding that the enemy did not follow.

"Promise that you won't talk to any but natives, or I decline to lead this expedition," said Amanda firmly.

"I promise," returned Mat, with penitent meekness.

"Now we've got her!" croaked the Raven; "for she will have to learn French or hold her tongue."

"The language of the eye remains to me, and

am a proficient in that, ma'am," said Mat, roused by these efforts to deny her the right of free speech.

"You are welcome to it, dear," and Amanda departed to buy tickets and despatch the trunks, with secret misgivings that they would never be found again.

"Now we are fairly started, with no more weighing of luggage, fussing over checks, or packing of traps to afflict us. What a heavenly sense of freedom it gives one, to have nothing but an independent shawl-strap," said Matilda, as they settled themselves in a vacant car, and stowed away the bundles.

What a jolly day that was to be sure! Whether it was the air, the good coffee, or the liberty, certain it is that three merrier maids never travelled from St. Malo to Le Mans on a summer's day. Even the Raven forgot her woes, and became so exhilarated that she smashed her bromide bottle out of the window, declaring herself cured, and tried to sing "Hail Columbia," in a voice like an asthmatic bagpipe.

Mat amused herself and her comrades by picking up the different articles that kept tumbling down on

her head from her badly built bundle; while Amanda scintillated to such an extent that the others laughed themselves into hysterics, and lay exhausted, prone upon the seats.

They ate, drank, sung, gossiped, slept, read, and revelled, till another passenger got in, when propriety clothed them as with a garment, and the mirthful damsels became three studious statues.

The new-comer was a little priest; so rosy and young that they called him the "Reverend Boy." He seemed rather dismayed, at first; but, finding the ladies silent and demure, he took heart and read diligently in a dingy little prayer-book, stealing shy glances now and then from under his broad-brimmed hat at Amanda's white hands, or Matilda's yellow locks, as if these vanities of the flesh had not quite lost their charms for him. By and by he fell asleep, and leaned in his corner, making quite a pretty picture; for the ugly hat was off, his boyish face as placid as a child's, his buckled shoes, and neat black-stockinged legs stretched comfortably out, his plump hands folded over the dingy book, and the little hands lay peacefully on his breast.

He was quite at their mercy now; so the three

women looked as much as they liked, wondering if the poor dear boy was satisfied with the life he had chosen, and getting tenderly pitiful over the losses he might learn to regret when it was too late. His dreams seemed to be pleasant ones, however, for once he laughed a blithe, boyish laugh, good to hear; and when he woke, he rubbed his blue eyes and stared about, smiling like a newly roused baby.

He got out all too soon, was joined by several other clerical youths, and disappeared with much touching of big beavers, and wafting of cassocks.

Innocent, reverend little boy! I wonder what became of him, and hope his sleep is as quiet now as then, — his awakening as happy as it seemed that summer day.

Six o'clock saw our damsels at Le Mans; and, after dinner, a sunset walk took them to the grand old cathedral, where they wandered till moonrise. Pure Gothic of the twelfth century, rich in stained glass, carved screens, tombs of kings and queens, dim little chapels, where devout souls told their beads before shadowy pictures of saints and martyrs, while over all the wonderful arches seemed to soar, one above the other, light and graceful as the natu-

ral curves of drooping branches, or the rise and fall of some great fountain.

"We shall not see any thing finer than this, I'm sure. It's a perfect revelation to me," said Matilda, in a calm rapture at the beauty all about her.

"This is a pious-feeling church, and I could say my prayers here with all my soul; for it seems as if the religion of centuries had got built into it," added Lavinia, thinking of the ugly imitations at home.

"You will both turn Catholic before we get through," prophesied Amanda, retiring to study the tomb of Berengaria, Cœur de Lion's wife.

The square before the hotel was gay with a market, many soldiers lounging about, and flocks of people eating ices before the *cafés*. The ladies enjoyed it from the balcony, and then slumbered peacefully in a great room with three alcoves, much muslin drapery, and a bowl and pitcher like a good-sized cup and saucer.

Another look at the cathedral in the early morning, and then away to Tours, which place they found a big, clean, handsome city, all astir for the *Fête-Dieu*.

"We will stay over Sunday and see it," was the

general vote as the trio headed for the great church, and, catching sight of it, they subsided into a seat by the fountain opposite, and sat looking silently at the magnificent pile.

How strangely impressive and eloquent it was! The evening red touched its gray towers with a mellow light, like sunshine on a venerable head. Lower down, flights of rooks circled round the fretted niches, quaint windows, and grotesque gargoyles, while the great steps below, swarmed with priests and soldiers, gay strangers and black-robed nuns, children and beggars.

For an hour our pilgrims sat and studied the wonderful *façade*, or walked round the outside, examining the rich carvings that covered every inch of the walls. Twilight fell before they had thought of entering, and feeling that they had seen enough for that night, they went thoughtfully home to dream of solemn shadows and saintly faces, for the cathedral haunted them still.

Next day was spent in viewing Charlemagne's Tower, and seeing the grand procession in honor of the day. The streets were hung with garlands, gay tapestries and banners, strewn with fresh boughs,

and lined with people in festival array. As the procession passed, women ran out and scattered rose-leaves before it, and one young mother set her blooming baby on a heap of greenery in the middle of the street, leaving it there, that the Holy Ghost under its canopy might pass over it. A pretty sight, the rosy little creature smiling in the sunshine as it sat playing with its own blue shoes, while the golden pageant went by; the chanting priests stepping carefully, and looking down with sudden benignity in their tired faces as the holy shadow fell on the bright head, making baby blessed and saved for ever in its pious mother's eyes.

A great band played finely, scarlet soldiers followed, then the banners of patron saints were borne by children. Saint Agnes and her lamb led a troop of pretty little girls carrying tall, white lilies, filling the air with their sweetness. Mary, Our Mother, was followed by many orphans with black ribbons crossed over the young hearts that had lost so much. Saint Martin led the charity boys in purple suits of just the color of the mantle he was dividing with the beggar on the banner. A pleasant emblem of the charitable cloak that covers so many.

Priests in full splendor paced solemnly along with censers swinging, candles flickering, sweet-voiced boys singing, and hundreds kneeling as they passed. Most impressive figures, unless one caught a glimpse of something cŏmically human to disturb the effect of the heavenly pageant. Lavinia had an eye for the ludicrous, and though she dropped a tear over the orphans, and with difficulty resisted a strong desire to catch and kiss the pretty baby, she scandalized her neighbors by laughing outright the next minute. A particularly portly, pious-looking priest, who was marching with superb dignity, and chanting like a devout bumble-bee, suddenly mislaid his temper, and injured the effect by boxing a charity boy's ears with his gilded missal, and then capped the climax by taking a pinch of snuff with a sonorous satisfaction that convulsed the heretic.

The afternoon was spent in the church, wandering to and fro, each alone to study and enjoy in her own way. Matilda lost her head entirely, and had silent raptures over the old pictures. Amanda said her prayers, looked up her dates, and imparted her facts in a proper and decorous manner, while Lavinia went up and down, finding for herself little pictures

not painted by hands, and reading histories more interesting to her than those of saints and martyrs.

In one dim chapel, with a single candle lighting up the divine sorrow of the Mater Dolorosa, knelt a woman in deep black, weeping and praying all alone. In another flowery nook dedicated to the Infant Jesus, a peasant girl was telling her beads over the baby asleep in her lap; her sunburnt face refined and beautified by the tenderness of mother-love. In a third chapel a pale, wasted, old man sat propped in a chair, while his rosy old wife prayed heartily to St. Gratien, the patron saint of the church, for the recovery of her John Anderson. And most striking of all, was a dark, handsome young man, well-dressed and elegant, who was waiting at the door of a confessional with some great trouble in his face, as he muttered and crossed himself, while his haggard eyes were fixed on the benignant figure of St. Francis, as if asking himself if it were possible for him also, to put away the pleasant sins and follies of the world, and lead a life like that which embalms the memory of that good man.

"If we don't go away to-morrow we never shall, for this church will bewitch us, and make it impos-

sible to leave," said Amanda, when at length they tore themselves away.

"I give up trying to sketch cathedrals. It can't be done, and seems impious to try," said Matilda, quite exhausted by something deeper than pleasure.

"I think the 'Reminiscences of a Rook' would make a capital story. They are long-lived birds, and could tell tales of the past that would entirely eclipse our modern rubbish," said Lavinia, taking a last look at the solemn towers, and the shadowy birds that had haunted them for ages.

The ladies agreed to be off early in the morning, that they might reach Amboise in time for the eleven o'clock breakfast. Amanda was to pay the bill, and to make certain inquiries at the office; Mat to fly out and do a trifle of shopping; while Lavinia packed up the bundles and mounted guard over them. They separated, but in half an hour all met again, not in their room according to agreement, but before the cathedral, which all had decided not to revisit on any account.

Matilda was there first, and as each of the others came stealing round the corner, she greeted them

with a laugh, in which all joined after the first surprise was over.

"I told you it would bewitch us," said Amanda; and then all took a farewell look, which lasted so long they had to rush back to the hotel in most unseemly haste.

"Now to fresh *châteaux* and churches new," sang Lavinia, as they rolled away on the fourth stage of their summer journey. A very short stage it was, and soon they were in an entirely new scene, for Amboise was a little, old-time village on the banks of the Loire, looking as if it had been asleep for a hundred years. The Lion d'Or was a quaint place, so like the inns described in French novels, that one kept expecting to see some of Dumas' heroes come dashing up, all boots, plumes, and pistols, with a love-letter for some court beauty in the castle on the hill beyond.

Queer galleries and stairs led up outside the house to the rooms above. The *salle-à-manger* was across a court, and every dish came from a kitchen round the corner. The *garçon* a beaming, ubiquitous creature, trotted perpetually, diving down steps, darting into dark corners, or skipping up ladders, producing

needfuls from most unexpected places. The bread came from the stable, soup from the cellar, coffee out of a meal-chest, and napkins from the housetop, apparently, for Adolphe went up among the weather-cocks to get them.

"No one knows us, no one can speak a word of English, and if we happen to die here it will never be known. How romantic and nice it is!" exclaimed Mat, in good spirits, for the people treated the ladies as if they were duchesses in disguise, and the young women liked it.

"I'm not so sure that the romance is all it looks. We should be in a sweet quandary if any thing happened to our sheet-anchor here. Just remember, in any danger, save Amanda, first, then she will save us. But if she is lost, all is lost," replied Lavinia, darkly, for she always took tragical views of life when her bones ached.

Up the hill they went after breakfast; and balm was found for the old lady's woes in the sight of many Angora cats, of great size and beauty. White as snow, with tails like plumes, and mild, yellow eyes, were these charmers. At every window sat one; on every door-step sprawled a bunch of down;

and frequently the eye of the tabby-loving spinster was gladdened by the touching spectacle of a blonde mamma in the bosom of her young family.

"If I could only carry it, I'd have one of those dears, no matter what it cost!" cried Lavinia, more captivated by a live cat than by all the dead Huguenots that Catherine de Medicis hung over the castle walls on a certain memorable occasion.

"Well, you can't, so come on and improve your mind with some good, useful history," said Amanda, leading them forward. "You *must* remember that Charles VII. was born here in 1470. That Anne of Brittany married him for her first husband, and that he bumped his head against a low door in the garden here above, as he was running through to play bowls with his Anne, and it killed him."

"Which? the bump or the bowls?" asked Mat, who liked to have things clearly stated.

"Don't be frivolous, child. Here Margaret of Anjou and her son were reconciled to Warwick. Abd-el Kader and his family were kept prisoners here, and in the garden is a tomb with a crescent on it; likewise a 'pleached walk,' and a winding drive inside the great tower, up which lords and

ladies used to ride straight into the hall," continued the sage Amanda, who yearned to enlighten the darkness of her careless friends.

A brisk old woman did the honors of the castle, showing them mouldy chapels, sepulchral halls, rickety stairs, grubby cells, and pitch-dark passages, till even the romantic Matilda was glad to see the light of day, and repose in the pleasant gardens while removing the cobwebs from her countenance and the dust from her raiment.

A lovely view gladdened their eyes as they stood on the balcony whence the amiable Catherine surveyed the walls hung thick, and the river choked up with the dead. Below, the broad Loire rolled slowly by, between its green banks. Little boys, in the costume of Cupid, were riding great horses in to bathe after the day's work. The gray roofs of the town nestled to the hillside, and far away stretched the summer landscape, full of vague suggestions of new scenes and pleasures to the pilgrims.

"We start for Chenonceaux at seven in the morning; so, ladies, I beg that you will be ready punctually," was the command issued by Amanda, as they went to their rooms, after a festive dinner of

what she called "earthworms and cacti," being fond of stewed brains, baked eels, and thistles and and pigweed chopped up in oil.

Such a droll night as the wanderers spent! No locks on the doors and no bells. Stairs leading straight up the gallery from the court-yard, carts going and coming, soft footsteps stealing up and down, whispers that sounded suspicious (though they were only orders to kill chickens and pick salad for the morrow), and a ghostly whistle that disturbed Lavinia so much, she at last draped herself in the green coverlet, and went boldly forth upon the balcony to see what it meant.

She intended to demand silence, in French that would strike terror to the soul of the bravest native. But when she saw that poor, dear, hard-worked *garçon* blacking boots by the light of the moon, her heart melted with pity; and, resolving to give him an extra fee, she silently retired to her stone-floored bower, and fell asleep in a stuffy little bed, whose orange curtains filled her dreams with volcanic eruptions and conflagrations of the most lurid description.

At seven, an open carriage with a stout pair of

horses and a sleepy driver, rolled out of the court-yard of the Lion d'Or. Within it sat three ladies, who gazed at one another with cheerful countenances, and surveyed the world with an air of bland content, beautiful to behold.

"I am fairly faint with happiness," sighed Matilda, as they drove through fields scarlet with poppies, starred with daisies, or yellow with buttercups, while birds piped gayly, and trees wore their early green.

"You did not eat any breakfast. That accounts for it. Have a crust, do," said Amanda, who seldom stirred without a good, sweet crust or two; for they were easy to carry, wholesome to chew, and always ready at a moment's notice.

"Let us save our 'entusymusy' till we get to the *château*, and enjoy this lovely drive in a peaceful manner," said Lavinia, still a little sleepy after her adventures in the glimpses of the moon.

So, for an hour or two they rolled along the smooth road, luxuriating in the summer sights and sounds about them; the wayside cottages, with women working in the gardens; villages clustered round some tiny, picturesque church; windmills whirling on the distant hill-tops; vineyards full of

peasants tying up the young vines, or trudging by with baskets on their backs, heaped with green cuttings for the goats at home. Old men, breaking stone by the roadside, touched their red caps to the pilgrims, jolly boys shouted at them from the cherry-trees, and little children peeped from behind the rose-bushes blooming everywhere.

Soon, glimpses of the winding Cher began to appear, then an avenue of stately trees, and then, standing directly in the river, rose the lovely *château* built for Diane de Poictiers by her royal lover. Leaving the carriage at the lodge, our sight-seers crossed the moat, and, led by a wooden-faced girl with a lisp, entered the famous pleasure-house, which its present owner (a pensive man in black velvet, who played fitfully on a French-horn in a pepper-pot tower), is carefully restoring to its former splendor.

The great picture-gallery was the chief attraction; and beginning with Diane herself — a tall, simpering baggage, with a bow, hounds, crescent, and a blue sash for drapery — they were led through a rapid review of all sorts of worthies and unworthies, relics and rubbish, without end. Portraits are always

interesting. Even Lavinia, who "had no soul for Art," as Mat said, looked with real pleasure at a bas-relief of Agnes of Sorel, and pictures of Montaigne, Rabelais, Ninon D'Enclos, Madame de Sévigné, and miniatures of La Fayette and Ben Franklin. The latter gentleman looked rather out of place in such society; but, perhaps, his good old face preached the Dianes and Ninons a silent sermon. His plain suit certainly was a relief to the eye, wearied with peri-wigged sages and bejewelled sinners.

Here was the little theatre where Rousseau's plays were acted. Here were the gilded chairs in which kings had sat, swords heroes had held, books philosophers had pored over, mirrors that had reflected famous beauties, and painted walls that had looked down on royal revels long ago.

The old kitchen had a fireplace big enough for a dozen cooks to have spoilt gallons of broth in, queer pots and pans, and a handy little window, out of which they could fish at any moment, for the river ran below.

The chapel, chambers, balconies, and terraces were all being repaired; for, thanks to George Sand's grandmother, who owned the place in the

time of the Revolution, it was spared out of respect to her, and is still a charming relic of the past.

The ladies went down the mossy steps, leading from the gallery to the further shore, and, lying under the oaks, wiled away the noon-time by re-peopling the spot with the shapes that used to inhabit it. A very happy hour it was, dreaming there by the little river, with the scent of new-mown hay in the fresh wind, and before them the airy towers and gables of the old *château* rising from the stream like a vision of departed splendor, love, and romance.

Having seen every thing, and bought photographs *ad libitum* of the wooden-faced lisper, who cheated awfully, the pilgrims drove away, satiated with relics, royalty, and "*regardez*."

Another night in the stony-hearted, orange-colored rooms, with the sleepless *garçon* sweeping and murmuring outside like a Banshee, while the hens roosted sociably in the gallery, the horses seemed to be champing directly under the bed, and the dead Huguenots bumping down upon the roof from the castle-walls. Another curious meal wafted from the bowels of the earth and cooled by all the airs that blow, — then the shawl-straps were girded anew, the

carriage (a half-grown omnibus with the jaundice) mounted, the farewell bows and adieux received, and forth rumbled the duchesses *en route* for Blois.

"My heart is rent at leaving that lovely *château*," said Mat, as they crossed the bridge.

"I mourn the earth-worms, the cacti, and the tireless 'gossoon,'" added Amanda, who appreciated French cookery and had enjoyed confidences with Adolphe.

"The cats, the cats, the cats! I could die happy if I had one," murmured Lavinia; and with these laments they left the town behind them.

Any thing hotter than Blois, with its half dried-up river, dusty boulevards, and baked streets, can hardly be imagined. But these indomitable women "did" the church and the castle without flinching. The former was pronounced a failure, but the latter was entirely satisfactory. The Emperor was having it restored in the most splendid manner. The interior seemed rather fresh and gay when contrasted with the time-worn exterior, but the stamped leathern hangings, tiled floors, emblazoned beams, and carved fireplaces, were quite correct. Dragons and crowns, porcupines and salamanders, monograms and flowers,

shone everywhere in a maze of scarlet and gold, brown and silver, purple and white.

Here the historical Amanda revelled, and quenched the meek old guide with a burst of information which caused him to stare humbly at "the mad English."

"*Regardez*, my dears, the chamber and oratory of Catherine de Medicis, who here plotted the death of the Duc de Guise. This is the cabinet of her son, Henri III., where he gave the daggers to the gentlemen who were to rid him of his enemy, the hero of the barricades. This is the Salle des Gardes, where Guise was leaning on the chimney-piece when summoned to the king. This is the little room at the entrance of which he was set upon in the act of lifting the drapery, and stabbed with forty wounds."

"Ow! how horrid!" gasped Matilda, staring about as if she saw the sanguinary gentlemen approaching.

"So interesting! Do go on!" cried Lavinia, who was fond of woe, and enjoyed horrors.

"This is the hall where the body lay for two hours, covered with a cloak and a cross of straw on the breast," cut in Amanda, as the guide opened his

mouth. "Here the king came to look upon the corpse of the once mighty Henri le Balafré, and spurned it with his foot, saying,—I shall not translate it for you, Mat,—'Je ne le croyais pas aussi grand,' and then ordered it to be burnt, and the ashes cast into the river. Remember the date, I implore you, December 23, 1588."

As Amanda paused for breath the little man took the word, and rattled off a jumble of facts and fictions about the window from which Marie de Medicis lowered herself when imprisoned here by her dutiful son, Louis XIII.

"I wish the entire lot had been tossed out after her, for I do think kings and queens are a set of rascals," cried Mat, scandalized by the royal iniquities to which she had been listening, till the hair stood erect upon her innocent head.

The Salle des Etats was being prepared for the trial of the men who had lately attempted the Emperor's life, and a most theatrical display of justice was to be presented to the public. The richly carved stair-case, with Francis the First's salamanders squirming up and down it, was a relic worth seeing; but the parched pilgrims found the

little pots of clotted cream quite as interesting, and much more refreshing, when they were served up at lunch (the pots, not the pilgrims), each covered with a fresh vine-leaf, and delicately flavored with buttercups and clover.

Amanda won the favor of the stately *garçon* by praising them warmly, and he kept bringing in fresh relays, and urging her to eat a third, a fourth, with a persuasive dignity hard to resist.

"But yes, mademoiselle, one more, for nowhere else can *crême de St. Gervais* be achieved. They are desired, ardently desired, in Paris; but, alas! it is impossible to convey them so far, such is their exquisite delicacy."

How many the appreciative ladies consumed, the muse saith not, but the susceptible heart of the great *garçon* was deeply touched, and it was with difficulty that they finally escaped from his attentions.

On being presented with a cast-off camp-stool, and a pair of old boots to dispose of, he instantly appropriated them as graceful *souvenirs*, and clasping his hands, declared with effusion that he would seat his infant upon the so-useful stool, and offer the

charming boots to Madame, my wife, who would weep for joy at this touching *tableau.*

With this melodramatic valedictory, he suffered the guests to depart, and the last they saw of him, he was still waving a dirty napkin as he stood at the gate, big, bland, and devoted to the end, though the drops stood thick upon his manly brow, and the sun glared fiercely on his uncovered head.

"I shall write an article on *garçons* when I get home," said Lavinia, who was always planning great works and never executing them. "We have known such a nice variety, and all have been so good to us that we owe them a tribute. You remember the dear, tow-headed one at Morlaix, who insisted on handing us dishes of snails, and papers of pins with which to pick out the repulsive delicacy?"

"Yes, and the gloomy one with black linen sleeves who glowered at us, sighed gustily in our ears, and anointed us with gravy as he waited at table," added Amanda.

"Don't forget the dark one, with languid, Spanish eyes and curly hair, on the boat going down the Rance. How picturesque and polite he was, to be sure, as he kept picking up our beer-bottles when

they rolled about the deck!" put in Mat, who had the dark youth safely in her sketch-book, with eyes as big and black as blots.

"The solemn one at Tours, who squirted seltzer-water out of window at the beggars, without a smile, was very funny. So was the little one with grubby hands, who tottered under the big dishes, but insisted on carrying the heaviest."

"The fast-trotter at Amboise won my heart, he was so supernaturally lively, and so full of hurried amiability. A very dear *garçon* indeed."

"Be sure you remember the superb being at Brest. whose eyes threatened to fall out of his head at exciting moments. Also, Flabot's chubby boy who adored Mat, and languished at her, over the onions, like a Cupid in a blue blouse."

"I will do justice to every one," and Lavinia took copious notes on the spot.

Orleans was a prim, tidy town, and after taking a look at the fine statue of the Maid, and laughing at some funny little soldiers drumming wildly in the *Place*, our travellers went on to Bourges.

"This, now, is a nice, dingy old place, and we will take our walks abroad directly, for it looks like rain,

and we must make the most of our time and money," said Amanda;

> "For, though on pleasure she was bent,
> She had a frugal mind."

Forth they went, as soon as dinner was over, and found the waters all abroad also; for every man was playing away with a hose, every woman scrubbing her door-steps, and the children gayly playing leap-frog in the puddles.

"Nasty, damp place," croaked the Raven, obscuring her disgusted countenance behind the inevitable gray cloud, and gathering her garments about her, as they hopped painfully over the wet stones, for sidewalks there were none.

"I find it refreshing after the dust and heat. Please detach Mat from that shop window, and come on, or we shall see nothing before dark," replied the ever amiable Amanda.

Matilda *would* glue herself to every jeweller's window, and remain fascinated by the richness there displayed, till led away by force. On this occasion, however, her mania led to good results; for, at the ninth window, as her keepers were about to drag her away, a ring of peculiar antiquity caught their

eyes simultaneously, and, to Mat's amazement, both plunged into the little shop, clamoring to see it. A pale emerald, surrounded by diamond chippings set in silver, with a wide gold band cut in a leafy pattern, composed this gem of price.

"A Francis First ring, sold by a noble but impoverished family, and only a hundred francs, Madame," said the man, politely anxious to cheat the fair foreigners out of four times its value.

"Can't afford it," and Lavinia retired. But the shrewd Amanda, with inimitable shrugs and pensive sighs, regretted that it was so costly. "A sweet ring; but, alas! forty francs is all I have to give."

The man was desolated to think that eighty francs was the lowest he was permitted to receive. Would Madame call again, and perhaps it might be arranged?

Ah, no! Madame is forced to depart early, to return no more.

Mon Dieu! how afflicting! In that case, sixty would be possible for so rare a relic.

Madame is *abîmé*, but it is not to be. Forty is the utmost; therefore, "*Merci*," and "*Bonjour.*"

"Hold! Where shall it be sent?" cries the

man, giving in, but not confessing it, with awkward frankness.

A thousand thanks! Madame will pay for it at once; and laying down the money, she sweetly bows herself away, with the ring upon her finger.

"What a people!" ejaculated Lavinia, who always felt like a fly in a cobweb when she attempted to deal with the French, in her blunt, confiding way.

"It is great fun," answered Amanda, flashing her ring with satisfaction after the skirmish. "Will Madame kindly direct me to the house of Jacques Cœur?" she added, addressing an old woman clattering by in *sabots*.

"Allez toujours a droit en vous appuyant sur la gauche," replied the native, beaming and bowing till the streamers of her cap waved in the wind.

They followed these directions, but failed to find the place, and applied to another old woman eating soup on her door-step.

"Suivez le chemin droit en tombant à gauche," was the reply, with a wave of the spoon to all the points of the compass.

"Great heavens, what a language!" cried Lavinia, who had been vainly endeavoring to "support" her-

self, as she "fell" in every direction over and into the full gutters.

The house was found at last, an ancient, mysterious place, with a very curious window, carved to look as if the shutters were half open, and from behind one peeped a man's head, from the other a woman's, both so life-like that it quite startled the strangers. Murray informed the observers that these servants are supposed to be looking anxiously for their master's return, Jacques having suddenly disappeared, after lending much money to the king, who took that mediæval way of paying his debts.

Service was being held in the church, and the ladies went in to rest and listen, for the music was fine. Much red and white drapery gave the sanctuary the appearance of a gay drawing-room, and the profane Lavinia compared the officiating clergy to a set of red furniture. The biggest priest was the sofa, four deacons the arm-chairs, and three little boys the foot-stools, all upholstered in crimson silk, and neatly covered with lace tidies.

As if to rebuke her frivolity, a lovely fresh voice from the hidden choir suddenly soared up like a lark, singing so wonderfully that a great stillness

fell on the listeners, and while it lasted the tawdry church and its mummery were quite forgotten, as the ear led the heart up that ladder of sweet sounds to heaven. Even when the others joined in, one could still hear that child-voice soaring and singing far above the rest, as if some little angel were playing with the echoes among the arches of the roof.

A proud native informed the strangers that it was a poor boy whose exquisite voice was the pride of the town, and would in time make his fortune. As the choir-boys came racing downstairs after service, pulling off their dingy robes as they ran, Lavinia tried to pick out the little angel, but gave it up in despair, for a more uninteresting set of bullet-headed, copper-colored sprigs she never saw.

Rain drove the wanderers back to the hotel, and there they made a night of it. Ordering a fire in the largest of the three stuffy little cells which they occupied, they set about being comfortable, for it had turned chilly, and a furious wind disported itself in and out through numberless crevices. Lavinia was inspired to mull some wine, and brewed a mild jorum that cheered, but did not inebriate.

Amanda produced her Shakspeare, and read aloud

while the simmering and sipping went on. Matilda sketched the noble commander as she lay upon the sofa, with her Egyptian profile in fine relief, and her aristocratic red slippers gracefully visible. A large gray cat of a social turn joined the party, and added much to the domesticity of the scene by sitting on the hearth in a cosey bunch and purring blissfully.

"Now it is your turn to propose something for the general amusement, Mandy," said Mat, when the beakers were drained dry and the Montagues and Capulets comfortably buried.

"Let us attend to the culture of our nails," replied Amanda, producing her *polissoir*, powder, and knife.

Three cups of tepid water were produced, and the company sat eagerly soaking their finger-tips for a time, after which much pruning and polishing went on, to the great bewilderment of Puss, who poked her own paws into the cups, as if trying to test the advantages of this remarkable American custom.

"What *would* our blessed mother say if she saw us now?" said Mat, proudly examining ten pointed pink nails at the tips of her long fingers.

"People told us we should get demoralized if we came abroad, and this is the first step on the down-

ward road," returned Lavinia, shaking her head over her own backslidings.

"No: it's the second step. We ate calves' brains for dinner, and what I'm sure were frogs' legs with mushrooms. You know we vowed we wouldn't touch their horrid messes, but I really begin to like them," confessed Mat, who had pronounced every dish at dinner "De-licious!"

"Ha! I will write a poem!" cried Amanda, and leaping from the sofa she grasped her pen, flung open her portfolio, and in a few brief moments produced these inspired stanzas.

THE DOWNWARD ROAD.

Two Yankee maids of simple mien,
  And earnest, high endeavor,
Come sailing to the land of France,
  To escape the winter weather.
When first they reached that vicious shore
  They scorned the native ways,
Refused to eat the native grub,
  Or ride in native shays.
"Oh, for the puddings of our home!
  Oh, for some simple food!
These horrid, greasy, unknown things,
  How can you think them good?"
Thus to Amanda did they say,
  An uncomplaining maid,

Who ate in peace and answered not
Until one day they said, —
"How *can* you eat this garbage vile
Against all nature's laws?
How *can* you eat your nails in points,
Until they look like claws?"
Then patiently Amanda said,
"My loves, just wait a while,
The time will come you will not think
The nails or victuals vile."
A month has passed, and now we see
That prophecy fulfilled;
The ardor of those carping maids
Is most completely chilled.
Matilda was the first to fall,
Lured by the dark gossoon,
In awful dishes one by one,
She dipped her timid spoon.
She promised for one little week
To let her nails grow long,
But added in a saving clause
She thought it very wrong.
Thus did she take the fatal plunge,
Did compromise with sin:
Then all was lost, from that day forth
French ways were sure to win.
Lavinia followed in her train,
And ran the self-same road,
Ate sweet-bread first, then chopped-up brains,
Eels, mushrooms, pickled toad.
She cries, "How flat the home *cuisine*,
After this luscious food!
Puddings and brutal joints of meat,
That once we fancied good!"

And now in all their leisure hours,
One resource never fails,
Morning and noon and night they sit
And polish up their nails.
Then if in one short fatal month,
A change like this appears,
Oh, what will be the next result
When they have stayed for years?

Tremendous applause greeted this masterly effort, and other poems were produced with the rapidity of genius by Amanda and Lavinia, each writing the alternate verse, *à la* Beaumont and Fletcher, which gave a peculiar charm to these effusions.

When Matilda was called upon for a festive suggestion, she promptly replied, with a graceful yawn: —

"Let's go to bed."

The meeting, therefore, broke up, and the younger ladies retired to their cells in good order. But the Raven, excited by the jocund hour, continued to rustle and patter about the warm room in a state of inexpressible hilarity, most exasperating to the others, who desired to sleep. Not content with upsetting the fire-irons occasionally, singing to the cat, and slamming the furniture about, this restless bird kept appearing first at one cell door with a conundrum, then at the other with a joke, or insisted on telling

funny stories in her den, till the exhausted victims implored her to take an opium pill and subside before they became furious. She obeyed, and after a few relapses into wandering and joking, finally slumbered.

Then occurred the one thrilling adventure of this happy journey. In the darkest hour before dawn Mat awoke, heard a suspicious noise in the middle room, and asked if Lavinia was on the rampage again. No reply, and, listening, a low, rasping, rustling sound was heard.

"Thieves, of course. Our watches and purses are on the table, and Lavinia has probably forgotten to lock the door. I must attend to this." And up rose the dauntless Matilda, who feared neither man nor ghost.

Grasping her dagger, hitherto used as a paper cutter, but always eager to be steeped in the gore of brigands, robbers, or beasts of prey, she crept to the door and peeped in. The pale glow of the fire showed her a dark figure crouching in the opposite door-way. The click of a pistol caught her ear, but dodging quickly, the heroic girl cried sternly from the shelter of Lavinia's bed-curtain, —

"Come out, or I'll fire!"

"Mio Dio! is it only you?" answered a familiar voice, as Amanda, shrouded in a water-proof, sprang up and lit a match.

"What are you prowling about for?" demanded Mat.

"To blow your brains out, apparently," answered Mandy, lowering her arms. "Why are you abroad?"

"To stab you, I fancy," and Mat sheathed her dagger balked of its prey.

"I heard a noise."

"So did I."

"Let's see what it is," and lighting a candle, the fair Amazons looked boldly about the shadowy room.

Lavinia lay wrapt in slumber, with only the end of her sarcastic nose visible beyond the misty cloud that enveloped her venerable countenance. The outer door was fast, and the shutters closed. No booted feet appeared below the curtains, no living eyes rolled awfully in the portrait of the salmon-colored saint upon the wall. Yet the rustling and rasping went on, and with one impulse the defenders of sleeping innocence made for the table in the corner.

There was the midnight robber at his fell work! The big cat peacefully gnawing the cold chicken, and knocking about the treasured crusts dragged from the luncheon-basket carefully packed for an early start.

"Wake and behold the ruin your pet has made!"

"We might be murdered or carried off a dozen times over without her knowing it. Here's a nice duenna!"

And the indignant ladies shook, pinched, and shouted till the hapless sleeper opened one eye, and wrathfully demanded what the matter was.

They told her with eloquent brevity, but instead of praising their prowess, and thanking them with fervor, the ungrateful woman shut her eye again, merely saying with drowsy irascibility, —

"You told me to go to sleep, and I went; next time fight it out among yourselves, but don't wake me."

"Throw the cat out of window and go to bed, Mat," and Amanda uncocked her pistol with the resignation of one who had learned not to expect gratitude in this world.

"Touch a hair of that dear creature and I'll raise the house!" cried Lavinia, roused at once.

Puss, who had viewed the fray sitting bolt upright on the table, now settled the vexed question by skipping into Lavinia's arms, feeling, with the instinct of her race that her surest refuge was there. Mat retired in silent disgust, and the Raven fell asleep soothed by the grateful purring of her furry friend.

"Last night's experiences have given me a longing for adventures," said Mat, as they journeyed on next morning.

"I've had quite enough of that sort," growled Lavinia.

"Let us read our papers, and wait for time to send us something in the way of a lark," and Amanda obscured herself in a grove of damp newspapers.

Lavinia also took one and read bits aloud to Mat, who was mending her gloves, bright yellow, four-buttoned, and very dirty.

"Translate as you go along, I do so hate that gabble," begged Mat, who would *not* improve her mind.

So Lavinia gave her a free translation which

convulsed Amanda behind her paper. Coming to this passage, "Plusiers faits graves sont arrivés," the reader rendered it, "Several made graves have arrived," adding, "Dear me, what singular customs the French have to be sure!" A little farther on she read, "Un portrait de feu Monsieur mon père," adding, "A fire portrait means a poker sketch, I suppose."

Here a smothered giggle from Amanda caused the old lady to say, "Bless you!" thinking the dear girl had sneezed.

"I must have some blue cotton to mend my dress with. Remind me to get some at Moulins. By the way, how do you ask for it in French?" said Mat, surveying a rent in her skirts.

"Oh, just go in and say, 'Avez-vous le fils bleu,'" replied Lavinia, with a superior air.

"A blue son! My precious granny, what will you say next?" murmured Amanda, faint with suppressed laughter.

"What are you muttering about?" asked Granny, sharply.

"Trying to recall those fine lines in Wilhelm Meister; don't you remember? 'Wer nie sein Brod

mit Thränen ass,'" replied Amanda, polite even at the last gasp.

"I read my Goethe in decent English, and don't know any thing about training asses," returned Lavinia, severely.

That was too much! Amanda cast her paper down, and had her laugh out, as the only means of saving herself from suffocation. The others gazed upon her in blank amazement, till she found breath enough to enlighten them, when such peals of merriment arose, that the guard popped his head in to see if he had not unwittingly shipped a load of lunatics.

"That was splendid! But now we must sober down, for a gorgeous being is about to get in," said Amanda, as they stopped at a station.

The gorgeous being entered, and found three demure ladies rapt in newspapers. They apparently saw nothing but the words before them; yet every one of them knew that the handsome young man had bowed in the most superior manner; also, that he was dressed in brown velvet, long gaiters, buttoned to the knee, a ravishing blue tie, buff gloves, and pouch and powder-horn slung over his

shoulder. Also, that a servant with two dogs and a gun had touched his hat and said, "Oui, monsieur le comte," as he shut the door.

A slight thrill pervaded the statues as this fact was made known, and each began to wonder how the elegant aristocrat would behave. To say that he stared, feebly expresses the fixity of his noble gaze, as it rested in turn upon the three faces opposite. When satisfied, he also produced a paper and began to read. But Matilda caught a big, black eye peering over the sheet more than once, as she peered over the top of her own.

"I don't like him. Remember, we don't speak French," whispered the discreet Amanda.

"I can swear that I don't," said Lavinia, with an irrepressible smile, as she remembered the "blue son."

"The language of the eye is not forbidden me, and I can't sit baking under a newspaper all the way," returned Matilda, whose blond curls had evidently met with the great creature's approval.

A slight pucker about the Comte's lips caused a thrill of horror to pervade the ladies, as Amanda murmured under her breath, —

"He may understand English!"

"Then we are lost!" returned the tragic Raven.

"Wish he did. I really pine for a little attention. It gives such a relish to life," said Matilda, thinking regretfully of the devoted beings left behind.

The prudent Amanda and the stern Lavinia steeled their hearts, and iced their countenances to the comely gentleman. But the social Matilda could not refrain from responding to his polite advances, with a modest "Merci, Monsieur," as he drew the curtain for her, a smile when he picked up the unruly curling-stick, and her best bow as he offered his paper with a soft glance of the black eyes.

In vain Amanda tried to appall her with awful frowns; in vain Lavinia trod warningly upon her foot: she paid no heed, and left them no hope but the saving remembrance that she couldn't talk French.

"If the man don't get out soon, I'll tie her up in my shawl, and tell him she is mad," resolved Lavinia, whose spinster soul was always scandalized at the faintest approach to a flirtation.

"If the man does speak English, Mat will have it

all her own way," thought Amanda, remembering the vow imposed upon the reckless girl.

Alas, alas for the anxious twain! The man did *not* get out soon, the man *did* speak English, and in ten minutes Matilda was off, like a colt without a halter. The anguish of her keepers added zest to the fun, and finding that the gentleman evidently thought her the lady of the party (owing to the yellow gloves, smartest hat, and irreproachable boots), and the others in sober gray and black, were maid and duenna, this reprehensible girl kept up the joke, put on airs, and enjoyed that flirtatious hour to her heart's content.

As if to punish the others for their distrust, and to reward Mat's interest in him, M. le Comte devoted himself to Mademoiselle, telling her about his hunting, his estate, and finished by inviting her and her party to call and view his *château*, if they ever paused at the town, which had the honor of being his summer residence. Mat responded to all these courtesies with confiding sweetness, and when at length he was desolated at being obliged to tear himself away, she

"Gave sigh for sigh,"

as he retired with a superb bow, a gallant "Bon voyage, mesdames," and a wicked twinkle of the black eyes as they rested on the faces of the frozen ladies.

"I got rather the best of the joke in that little affair: didn't I?" said Mat, gayly, as the brown velvet Adonis vanished.

"You are a disgrace to your party and your nation," sternly responded Amanda.

Lavinia spoke not, but shook her little sister till the hat flew off her head, and she had only breath enough left to declare with unquenched ardor that she would do it again the very next chance she got.

Lectures, laughter, and longings for "my Comte" beguiled the remainder of the way, and *Moulang* (as Mat pronounced Moulins) was reached after a pleasant trip through a green country, picturesque with the white cattle of Berri. There was not much to see, but the town was so quaint and quiet, that Amanda was seized with one of her remarkable projects.

"Let us find a little house somewhere and stay a week or two. I fain would rest and ruminate among

the white cows for a while; have a little washing done, and slowly prepare to emerge into the world again. Lyons is our next point, and there we must bid adieu to freedom and shawl-straps."

"Very well, dear," responded Lavinia, with resignation, having learned that the best way to curb these aberrations of genius was to give in, and let circumstances prove their impracticability.

So Amanda inquired of the landlady if such a rustic cot could be found. Whereupon the dingy little woman clasped her dingy little hands, and declared that she had exactly the charming retreat desired. Truly yes, and she would at once make her toilette, order out the carriage, and display this lovely villa to the dear ladies.

With many misgivings the three squeezed themselves into a square clothes-basket on wheels, drawn by an immense, bony, white horse, driven by a striped boy, and adorned by Madame, in a towering bonnet, laden with amazing fruit, flowers, and vegetables. Lavinia counted three tomatoes, a bunch of grapes, poppies and pansies, wheat ears and blackberry-vines, a red, red rose, and one small lettuce, with glass dewdrops and green grubs lavishly

sprinkled over it. A truly superb *chapeau* and a memorable one.

Away they trundled through stony streets, dusty roads, waste grounds, marshy meadows, and tumbled-down pleasure-gardens, till the clothes-basket turned down a lane, and the bony horse stopped at length before a door in a high red wall.

"Behold!" cried madame, leading them with much clanking of keys, into a cabbage garden. A small tool-house stood among the garden-stuff, with brick floors, very dirty windows, and the atmosphere of a tomb. Bags of seed, wheelbarrows, onions, and dust cumbered the ground. Empty bottles stood on the old table, cigar ends lay thick upon the hearth, and a trifle of gay crockery adorned the mantel-piece.

"See, then, here is a *salon*, so cool, so calm. Above is a room with beds, and around the garden where the ladies can sit all day. A maid can achieve the breakfast here, and my carriage can come for them to dine at the hotel. Is it not charmingly arranged?"

"It is simply awful," said Mat, aghast at the prospect.

"Settle it as you like, dear, only I'm afraid I couldn't stay *very* long on account of the dampness," observed Lavinia, cheerfully, as she put a hoe-handle under her feet and wiped the blue mould from a three-legged chair.

"It won't do, so I'll tell her you are an invalid and very particular," said Amanda, with another inspiration, as she led the landlady forth to break the blow tenderly.

"My neuralgia is useful if it isn't ornamental; and what a comfort that is!" said Lavinia, as she lightly threw a large cockroach out of window, dodged a wasp, and crushed a fat spider.

And so it was in many ways. If the party wanted a car to themselves, Granny was ordered to lie down and groan dismally, which caused other travellers to shun the poor invalid. If rooms did not suit, suffering Madame *must* have sun or perish. Late lunches, easy carriages, extra blankets, every sort of comfort was for her, whether she wanted them or not.

"Shall I be sick or well?" was always the first question when an invitation came, for "my sister's delicate health" was the standing excuse when parties palled, or best gowns were not get-at-able.

While Amanda conferred with the hostess among the cabbages, Mat discovered that the picturesque white cattle in the field close by were extremely fierce and unsocial; that there was no house in sight, and the venerable horse and shay would never sustain many trips to and fro to dinner at the hotel. Lavinia poked about the house, and soon satisfied herself that it abounded in every species of what Fanny Kemble calls "entomological inconvenience," and an atmosphere admirably calculated to introduce cholera to the inhabitants of Moulins.

"It is all settled; let us return," said Amanda, appearing at last with an air of triumph, having appeased the old lady by eating green currants, and admiring an earwiggy arbor, commanding a fine view of a marsh where frogs were piping and cool mists rising as the sun set.

The chickens were tough at dinner, the wine bitter, the bread sour, but no one reproached Amanda as the cause of this change. And when the hostess bowed them out, next day, without a smile, they drove away, conscious only of deep gratitude that they were saved from leaving their bones to moulder among the cabbages of Moulins.

"Now we return to civilization, good clothes, and Christian food," said Lavinia, as they surveyed their fine rooms at the Grand Hotel, Lyons.

"Likewise letters and luggage," added Amanda, as the maid brought in a bundle of letters, and two porters came bumping up with the trunks.

"Well, I've enjoyed the trip immensely, though nothing very remarkable has happened," said Mat, diving into her private ark with satisfaction.

"I should like to wander in the wilderness for years, if I could hear from my family at intervals," said Lavinia, briskly breaking open the plump, travel-worn letters.

"Then you consider our trip a success?" asked Amanda, pausing in the act of removing the dust from her noble countenance.

"A perfect success! We have done what we planned, had no mishaps, seen and enjoyed much, quarrelled not at all, laughed a great deal, and been altogether festive, thanks to you. I shall hang my shawl-strap on the castle wall as a trophy of the prowess of my Amanda, and the success of the last Declaration of American Independence," replied Lavinia.

"I, also," said Mat, opening her bundle for the one hundredth and last time.

"You do me proud; I humbly thank you," and with a superb curtsy the commander-in-chief modestly retired behind the towel.

IV.

SWITZERLAND.

"MY children, listen to the words of wisdom ere it is too late," began Lavinia, as the three sat about in dressing-gowns after a busy day in Geneva.

"We listen, go on, Granny," replied the irreverent girls.

"If we stay here a week longer, we are ruined. Firstly, this Metropole is an expensive hotel; also noisy and full of fashionable people, whom I hate. Secondly, the allurements of the jewellers' shops are too much for us, and we had better flee before we spend all our money. Thirdly, if war does break out along the Rhine, as rumor now predicts, Geneva will be crammed with people whose plans, like ours, are upset; therefore we had better skip across the lake, and secure a comfortable place for ourselves at Vevey or Montreux, for we shall probably have to winter there."

"Hear, hear! we will do it, and if Italy doesn't get over her little revolution in time for us to go to Rome, we must content ourselves with some nook in this refuge for all wanderers on the face of the continent," said Amanda.

"But I like Geneva so much. It's such fun to watch the splendid waiters file in at dinner, looking like young gentlemen ready for a ball; the house is so gay, and the shops! — never did I dream of such richness before. Do stay another week and buy a few more things," prayed Matilda, who spent most of her time gloating over the jewelry, and tempting her sister to buy all manner of useless gauds.

"No: we will go to-morrow. I know of several good *pensions* at Vevey, so we are sure of getting in somewhere. Pack at once, and let us flee," returned Lavinia, who, having bought a watch, a ring, and a locket, felt that it was time to go.

And go they did, settling for a month at Bex, a little town up the valley of the Rhone, remarkable for its heat, its dirt, its lovely scenery, and the remarkable perfection to which its inhabitants had brought the *goître*, nearly every one being blessed with an unsightly bunch about the neck, which they

decorated with ribbons and proudly displayed to the disgusted traveller.

Here in the rambling old Hôtel des Bains, with its balconies, gardens, and queer little rooms, the wanderers reposed for a time. A Polish countess, with her lover, daughter, and governess, conferred distinction upon the house. An old Hungarian count, who labored under the delusion that he descended in a direct line from Zenobia, also adorned the scene. An artist with two pretty boys, named Alfred Constable Landseer Reynolds and Allston West Cuyp Vandyke, afforded Matilda much satisfaction.

English mammas with prim daughters of thirty or so still tied to their apron-strings were to be found, of course, for they are everywhere; also wandering French folk raving about the war one minute and tearing their hair over bad coffee the next.

Amanda read newspapers and talked politics with the old count; while Lavinia, with a paper bag of apricots under one arm and a volume of D'Israeli's novels under the other, spent her shining hours wandering from balcony to garden, enjoying the heat, which gave her a short respite from her woes.

While here Matilda, in company with a kindred soul, made the ascent of Mount St. Bernard with the pleasing accompaniments of wind, rain, thunder, and lightning. But the irrepressible Americans went on in spite of warnings from more prudent travellers who stopped half-way. With one mule and a guide for escort, the two enthusiasts waded swollen streams with ice-cold water up to their knees, climbed slippery roads, faced what seemed a whirlwind at that height, and, undaunted by the uproar of the elements, pressed on to the Hospice, to the great admiration of Moritz, the guide, who told them he had seldom taken men up in such a storm, never ladies.

At the Hospice the dripping lasses found a hospitable welcome from the handsome monk who does the honors there. Being provided with dry garments, and having much fun over the tall Matilda draped in skirts of many colors in the attempt to get any long enough, they were fed and warmed by the engaging monk, who entertained them as they sat about a roaring fire while the storm raged without, with thrilling tales of the travellers they had saved, the wild adventures they had known in

the dreadful winter time, and the gifts bestowed upon them by grateful travellers or generous guests.

The Prince of Wales had sent them a piano, and many fine pictures ornamented the walls from famous persons. An old English lady who spends her summers up there seemed much amused at the prank of the girls, and evidently wondered what their guardians were about.

A merry and memorable evening; and when, on going to their cells, they found the beds nicely warmed, Matilda exclaimed, —

"This is the most delightful union of the romantic and the comfortable I ever saw. Alps and warming-pans taken 'jintly' are delicious!"

At five next morning they were wakened by the chanting of the invisible brotherhood, and went down to the chapel for mass. On going out for a clamber on the rocks, seven or eight great dogs came baying and leaping about them, licking their hands and smelling their garments to see if they were hurt. Looking into their bright, benevolent eyes, one could well believe the wonderful tales told of their courage and sagacity. Though so powerful

and large they were gentle as kittens, and the dog-loving girls were proud to receive and return the caresses of these four-footed heroes.

Leaving a grateful *souvenir* in the box intended to receive whatever guests choose to leave, the girls descended in the morning sunshine, finding it a very different experience from the ascent. All was clear and calm now,—beautiful and grand; and only pausing at M. to send back a fine engraving to the comely priest, who had made a deep impression on their romantic hearts, the *enfants* returned to their anxious friends, mildewed, rumpled, and weary, but full of enthusiastic delight over their successful ascent of St. Bernard.

War broke out, and Alexandre, the all-accomplished head-waiter, dropped his napkin, shouldered his gun, and marched away, leaving the Hôtel des Bains desolate. Being pretty thoroughly baked, and very weary of the little town, our trio departed to Vevey, and settled down in the best *pension* that ever received the weary traveller.

Standing in its own pretty grounds, and looking out upon the lake, Pension Paradis deserves its name. Clean and cosey within, a good table, a

kindly hostess, and the jolliest old host ever seen! what more could the human heart desire?

Vevey was swarming with refugees. Don Carlos, or the Duke de Madrid, as he was called, was there with his Duchess and court, plotting heaven knows what up at his villa, with the grave, shabby men who haunted the town.

Queen Isabella reigned at one hotel, and Spanish grandees pervaded the place. There were several at Pension Paradis, and no one guessed what great creatures they were till a *fête* day arrived, and the grim, gray men blossomed out into counts, marquises, and generals covered with orders, stars, and crosses splendid to behold.

One particularly silent, shabby little man with a shaven head and fine black eyes, who was never seen to smile, became an object of interest on that occasion by appearing in a gorgeous uniform with a great gilt grasshopper hanging down his back from a broad green ribbon. Who was he? What did the grasshopper mean? Where did he go to in a fine carriage, and what was he plotting with the other Carlists, who dodged in and out of his room at all hours?

No one ever knew, and all the artful questions put to the young Spaniard, who played croquet with the girls, were unavailing. Nothing was discovered, except that little Mirandola had a title, and might be sent back to Spain any day to lose his life or liberty in some rash plot, which circumstance made the black-eyed boy doubly interesting to the free-born Americans. Lavinia bewailed his hard lot, Amanda taught him whist and told his fortune, and Matilda put him in her sketch-book done in the blackest India-ink. It is also to be recorded that the doomed little Don was never seen to laugh but once, and that was when the girls taught him the classical game of Muggins. The name struck him; he went about saying it to himself, and on the first occasion of his being "mugginsed," he was so tickled that he indulged in a hearty boy's laugh; but immediately recovered himself, and never smiled again, as if in penance for so forgetting his dignity.

A bashful Russian, who wore remarkably fine broadcloth and had perfect manners, was likewise received into the good graces of the ladies, who taught him English, called him "the Baron" in

private, and covered him with confusion in public by making him talk at table.

But the most amusing of all the family was Madame A., a handsome widow from Lyons, with two ugly children and a stout old mamma, who wore orange stockings and a curious edifice of black lace encircled with large purple asters. The widow had married an Italian artist, who was mortally jealous of his wife, whose blonde beauty attracted much attention at Rome. In some quarrel with a model the husband was stabbed, and the handsome widow left in peace.

A tall, fair lady, with a profile like Marie Antoinette; she dressed in white with violet ribbons, and wore much ancient jewelry. A loud-voiced, energetic woman, who bewailed the sack of her house at Lyons, scolded her children, and cursed the Germans with equal volubility and spirit. When silent she was the picture of a patrician beauty; but, alas! her voice destroyed the charm, and her manners — great heavens, what things that woman did! Picking her pearly teeth with a hair-pin, and knocking her darlings into their chairs with one sweep of her elbow when they annoyed her at

table, were the least of the horrors she perpetrated.

But she talked well, devoted herself to her family, and took misfortune bravely; so much may be pardoned her.

Her infants were only remarkable for their ugliness and curious costumes. The little girl usually wore soiled silk gowns, and had her hair tied up with bits of twine. The boy appeared in a suit of yellow calico spotted with black, looking very much like a canary bird who had fallen into an inkstand. On festival occasions he wore white cloth raiment, with red ribbons stuck here and there, and high red boots.

But, on the whole, the old mamma was the queerest of the set; for she spent most of her time lumbering up and down stairs, which amusement kept the orange hose constantly before the public. When not disporting herself in this way, she dozed in the *salon*, or consumed much food at table with a devotion that caused her to suck her fingers, on every one of which shone an antique ring of price. Her head-gear was a perpetual puzzle to the observing Lavinia, who could never discover whether it

was a cap, a bonnet, or a natural production, for it was never off. Madame walked out in it, wore it all day, and very likely slept in it. At least Lavinia firmly believed so, and often beguiled the watches of the night, imagining the old soul placidly slumbering with the perennial asters encircling her aged brow like a halo.

One other party there was who much amused the rest of the household. An American lady with a sickly daughter, who would have been pretty but for her affectation and sentimentality. The girl was engaged to a fierce, dissipated little Russian, who presented her with a big bouquet every morning, followed her about all day like a dog, and glared wrathfully at any man who cast an eye upon the languishing damsel in white muslin and flowing curls "bedropt with pearls," as a romantic lady expressed it.

It was evident that the Russian without any vowels in his name was going to marry Mademoiselle for her money, and the weak Mamma was full of satisfaction at the prospect. To others it seemed a doubtful bargain, and much pity was felt for the feeble girl doomed to go to Russia with a husband

who had "tyrant" written in every line of his bad, *blasé* little face and figure. French polish could not hide the brute, nor any quantity of flowers conceal the chain by which he was leading his new serf away to bondage in St. Petersburg.

Into the midst of this select society came a countryman of our three, — a jocund youth fresh from Algiers, with relics, adventures, and tales that utterly eclipsed the Arabian Nights. Festive times followed, for the "Peri" (the pet name of aforesaid youth) gave them the fruits of his long wanderings, sung whole operas heard in Paris, danced ballets seen in Berlin, recounted perils among the Moors, served up gossip from the four corners of the globe, and conversed with each member of the household in his or her own language.

A cheerful comrade was the "Peri," and a great addition to the party, who now spent most of their time sitting about the town, eating grapes, and listening to the pranks of this sprightly M.D., who seemed to be studying his profession by wandering over Europe with a guitar *à la troubadour*.

Sounding the lungs of a veiled princess in Morocco was the least of his adventures, and the treasures he

had collected supplied Lavinia with materials for unlimited romances: cuff-buttons made from bits of marble picked up among the ruins of Carthage; diamond crescents and ear-rings bought in Toledo, so antique and splendid that relic-loving Amanda raved about them; photographs of the *belles* of Constantinople, Moorish coins and pipes, bits of curious Indian embroidery; and, best of all, the power of telling how each thing was found in so graphic a manner that Eastern bazaars, ruins, and palaces seemed to rise before the listeners as in the time of the magic story-tellers. But all too soon he packed his knapsack, and promising to bring each of his friends the nose or ear of one of the shattered saints from the great cathedral at Strasbourg, the "Peri" vanished from Paradis, and left them all lamenting.

The little flurry in Italy ending peacefully, our travellers after much discussion resolved to cross the Alps and spend the winter in Rome, if possible. So with tragic farewells from those they left behind them, who, hoping to keep them longer, predicted all manner of misfortunes, the three strong-minded ladies rumbled away in the *coupè* of a diligence to Brieg.

A lovely day's journey up the valley of the Rhone, and a short night's rest in the queer little town at the foot of the mountains.

Before light the next morning they were called, and, after a hurried breakfast in a stony hall, went shivering out into the darkness, and, stumbling through the narrow street, came to the starting-point. Lanterns were dancing about the square, two great diligences loomed up before them, horses were tramping, men shouting, and eager travellers scrambling for places. In the dimly lighted office, people were clamoring for tickets, scolding at the delay, or grimly biding their time in corners, with one eye asleep, and the other sharply watching the conductor.

"Isn't it romantic?" cried Matilda, wide awake, and in a twitter of excitement.

"It is frightfully cold; and I don't see how we are going, for both those caravans are brimful," croaked Lavinia, chafing her purple nose, and wishing it had occurred to her to buy a muff before going to sunny Italy.

"I have got through-tickets, and some one is bound to see us over these snow-banks, so 'trust in

Providence and the other man,' and we shall come out right, I assure you," replied the energetic Amanda, who had conferred with a spectral being in the darkness, and blindly put her faith in him.

Away lumbered one diligence after the other, the first drawn by seven horses, the second by five, while the carrier's little cart with one brought up the rear. But still three muffled ladies sat upon a cool stone in the dark square, waiting for the spectre to keep his promise.

He did like a man; for suddenly the doors of an old stable flew open, and out rattled a comfortable carriage with a pair of stout little horses jingling their bells, and a brisk driver, whose voice was pleasant, as he touched his hat and invited the ladies to enter, assuring them that they would soon overtake and pass the heavy diligences before them.

"Never again will I doubt you, my Amanda," cried the Raven, packing herself into the dowager's corner with a grateful heart.

"I hope the top of this carriage opens for I *must* see *every thing*," cried Matilda, prancing about on the front seat in a chaos of wraps, books, bottles, and lunch-baskets.

"Of course it does, and when there is any thing to see we will see it. It is dark and cold now, so we'd better all go to sleep again."

With which sage remark, Amanda burrowed into her cloaks and slumbered. But not the other two. Matilda stuck her head out of one window, uttering little cries of wonder and delight at all she saw; while Livy watched the solemn stars pale one by one as the sky brightened, and felt as if she were climbing up, out of a dark valley of weariness and pain, into a new world full of grand repose.

Slowly winding higher and higher through the damp pine forest, softly stirring in the morning wind, they saw the sky warm from its cold gray to a rosy glow, making ready for the sun to rise as they never saw it rise before.

> "Full many a glorious morning have I seen,
> Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,"

but never more wonderfully than on that day. Long after the distant peaks flamed in the ruddy light, they rode in shadow; but, turning suddenly round a corner, the sun came dazzling through a great gorge, startling them with the splendor it brought.

Down went the carriage-top, and standing bolt upright, three pairs of eager eyes drank in the grandeur and the beauty that makes the crossing of the Simplon an experience to live for ever in the memory. Peak after peak of the Bernese Oberland rose behind them, silver white against a wonderful blue sky. Before them Monte Rosa, touched with the morning red, and all around great glaciers glittering in the sunshine, awful gorges with torrents thundering from the heights above, relics of landslides and avalanches still visible in uprooted trees, boulders tumbled here and there, and ruins of shepherds' huts in solitary nooks where sheep now feed.

The road crept in and out, over frail bridges, spanning chasms that made one dizzy to look into, through tunnels of solid rock, or galleries with windows over which poured waterfalls from the treacherous glaciers above. This road is a miracle in itself, for all nature seems to protest against it, and the elements never tire of trying to destroy it. Only a Napoleon would have had the audacity to dream of such a path, and it is truly a royal road into a lovely land.

Passing the diligences the little carriage went

rapidly on, and soon the three were almost alone. Out leaped Lavinia and Matilda and walked along the level way that curved round a great gorge.

"Go on and let me be. It is all so magnificent it almost takes my breath away. I must just sit a minute, like a passive bucket, and let it pour into me," said Lavinia, in a solemn tone.

Mat understood; for her own heart and soul were full, and with a silent kiss of sympathy, walked on, leaving her sister to enjoy that early mass in a grander cathedral than any built with hands.

In spite of the sunshine it was very cold, and when the three met again their noses looked like the eldest Miss Pecksniff's, "as if Aurora had nipped and tweaked it with her rosy fingers." Subsiding into their places with pale, excited faces, they went silently on for a long time, with no sound but the chime of the bells on the horses who were covered with a light hoar-frost. Wrapped up to their eyes, like Egyptian women, sat Livy and Amanda; while Matilda, having tried to sketch Monte Rosa, and given it up, made a capital caricature of them as they ate cold chicken, and drank wine, in a primitive manner, out of the bottle.

It was a sudden descent from the sublime to the ridiculous; but the feeble human mind cannot bear too much glory at once, and is saved by the claims of the prosaic body, that will get tired and hungry even atop of the everlasting hills. So the enthusiasts picked their chicken bones, sipped their wine, and felt less exhausted and hysterical. A good laugh over the carrier's little boy, who sniffed the banquet afar off, and came running to offer a handful of pale Alpine flowers, with wistful glances at the lunch, did them more good still: for the little chap caught and bolted the morsels they gave him with such dexterous rapidity, it was as good as juggling.

Refuges and the Hospice came in sight one after the other, and while waiting to change horses one had time to wonder how the people living there managed to be such a stolid, dirty, thriftless-looking set. Mountaineers should be intelligent, active, and hardy; but these men were a most ungainly crew, and Lavinia's theories got a sad blow.

A bad dinner at Simplon would have been an affliction at any other time; but with the Valley of Gondo for dessert, no one cared for other food. Fol-

lowing the wild stream that had worn its way between the immense cliffs, they drove rapidly down toward Italy, feeling that this was a fit gateway to the promised land.

At Iselle, on the frontier, they enacted a little farce for the benefit of the custom-house officers. Lavinia and Amanda had old passports, and had been told they would be needed. Mat had none, so she was ordered to try the *rôle* of maid. Before they arrived, she took out her ear-rings, tied up her curls under a dingy veil, put on a waterproof, and tried to assume the demure air of an Abigail.

When they alighted, she was left to guard the wraps in the carriage while the others went with the luggage, expecting to have much trouble; for all manner of hindrances had been predicted owing to the unsettled state of the country. Nothing could be simpler, however; no passports were demanded, a very careless search of luggage, and it was all over. So Matilda threw off her disguise, and ascended the diligence in her own character, for here, alas! they left the cozy little carriage with the affable driver and the jingling bells.

Only two places could be found in the crowded

diligences, and great was the fuss till Amanda was invited up aloft by a friendly gentleman who had a perch behind, large enough for two. There they discussed theology and politics to their hearts' content, and at parting the worthy man cut his book in two, and gave Amanda half that she might refresh herself with a portion of some delightfully dry work on Druidical Remains, Protoplasm, or the state of the church before the flood.

The force of contrast makes the charm of this entry into Italy; for, after the grandeur of the Alps and the gloomy wildness of Gondo, the smiling scene is doubly lovely as one drives down to Domo d'Ossola. Weariness, hunger, and sleep were quite forgotten; and when our travellers came to Lago Maggiore, glimmering in the moonlight, they could only sigh for happiness, and look and look and look.

"Victory has perched upon our banners so far I am sure, for never was a trip more delightful. It is not every stranger who is fortunate enough to see sunrise, noonday, sunset, and moonlight in crossing the Alps," said Matilda, as she fell into her bed quite exhausted by the excitement of the day.

"I feel a richer, better woman for it, and don't believe I shall ever see any thing more satisfactory if I stay in Italy ten years," responded Lavinia, wrapping the red army-blanket

"Like a martial cloak around her."

"Wait till the spell of Rome is upon you, and then see what you will feel, my Granny," predicted Amanda, who *had* felt the spell, and had not yet escaped from it.

"Don't believe it will suit me half so well," persisted Livy, who would prefer nature to art, much to Amanda's disgust.

"We shall see," observed Amanda, with the exasperating mildness of superior knowledge.

"We shall!" and Livy tied her cap in a hard knot as if to settle the matter.

V.

ITALY.

SLEEP as deep, dreamless, and refreshing as if the beneficent spirit of Carlo Borromeo still haunted the enchanted lake, prepared the three for a day of calm delights. The morning was spent floating over the lake in a luxuriously cushioned boat with a gay awning and a picturesque rower, to visit Isola Bella. Every one knows what a little Paradise has been made to blossom on that rock; so raptures over the flowers, the marbles, the panniers of lovely fruit, and the dirty, pretty children who offered them, are unnecessary.

In the afternoon, having despatched the luggage to Florence, our travellers sailed away to Luini, catching last glimpses of Monte Rosa, and enjoying the glories of an Italian sunset on an Italian lake. At Luini the girls caused much excitement by insisting on sitting up with the driver instead of sharing the *coupé* with their decorous duenna. "We *must*

see the lovely views and the moonlight," said Amanda, and up she went.

"To sit aloft with a brigandish driver dressed in a scarlet and black uniform, with a curly horn slung over his shoulder, and to go tearing up hill and down with four frisky horses is irresistible," and up skipped Matilda.

"You will both catch your death of cold, if you don't break your necks, so it will be well to have some one to nurse or bury you," and Lavinia, finding commands and entreaties vain, entered the *coupé* with mournful dignity.

With a toot of the horn, and cheers from the crowd, which the girls gracefully acknowledged, away rumbled the diligence, with at least two very happy occupants. How lovely it was! First, the soft twilight wrapping every thing in mysterious shadow, and then the slow uprising of a glorious full moon, touching the commonest object with its magical light. Cries of rapture from the girls atop were answered by exclamations from Livy, hanging half out of the *coupé* regardless of night air, or raps on the head from overhanging boughs, as they went climbing up woody hills, or dashing down steep

roads that wound so sharply round corners, it was a wonder the airy passengers did not fly off at every lurch. Rattling into quiet little towns with a grand "tootle-te-too" of the horn was an especial delight, and to see the people gather so quickly that they seemed to spring from the ground. A moment's chatter, a drink for the horses, a soft "Felice notte," another toot, and away thundered the diligence for miles more of moonlight, summer air, and the ecstasy of rapid motion.

What that dear, brown driver with the red vest, the bobtailed, buttony coat, and the big yellow tassels dancing from his hat brim, thought of those two American damsels we shall never know. But it may be imagined that, after his first bewilderment, he enjoyed himself; for Amanda aired her Italian and asked many questions. Matilda invited him to perform national airs on all occasions, and both admired him as openly as if he had been a pretty child.

Lavinia always cherished a dark suspicion that she narrowly escaped destruction on that eventful night; for, judging from the frequent melody, and the speed of the horses, she was sure that either Amanda tooted and Matilda drove, or that both so bewildered

the brigand that he lost his head. However, it was all so delightful that even Granny felt the charm, and was sure that if they did upset in some romantic spot, a Doctor Antonio would spring up as quickly as a mushroom, and mend their bones, marry one of her giddy charges, and end the affair in the most appropriate manner.

Nothing happened, fortunately, and by nine o'clock they were safely at Lugano, and, tearing themselves from the dear brigand, were taken possession of by a shadowy being, who fed them in a marble hall with statues ten feet high glaring at them as they ate, then led them to a bower which had pale green doors, a red carpet, blue walls, and yellow bed covers, — all so gay it was like sleeping in a rainbow.

As if another lovely lake under the windows, and moonlight *ad libitum*, was not enough, they had music also. Lavinia scorned the idea of sleep, and went prowling about the rooms, hanging over the balconies, and doing the romantic in a style that was a disgrace to her years. She it was who made the superb discovery that the music they heard came from across the way, and that by opening a closet

window they could look into a theatre and see the stage.

All rushed at once and beheld an opera in full blast, heartily enjoying the unusual advantages of their position; for not only could they hear the warblers, but see them when the curtain was down. What a thing it was to see Donna Anna do up her back hair, Don Giovanni dance a jig, the stately Ottavio imbibe refreshment out of a black bottle, and the ghostly Commander prance like a Punchinello as they got him into position.

The others soon succumbed to sleep; but, till long after midnight, old Livy wandered like a ghost from the front balcony, with the lovely lake, to the closet window and its dramatic joys, feeling that no moment of that memorable night should be lost, for what other traveller could boast that she ever went to the opera wrapped in a yellow bedquilt?

On the morrow a few pictures of Luini before breakfast, and then more sailing over lakes, and more driving in festive diligences to Menaggio, where a boat like a market wagon without wheels bore them genteelly to Cadenabbia, and a week of repose on the banks of Lago Como.

Their palace did not "lift its marble walls to eternal summer" by any means; for it rained much, and was so cold that some took to their beds for warmth, stone floors looking like castile-soap not being just the thing for rheumatism. Hand-organs, dancing-bears, two hotels, one villa, no road but the lake, and an insinuating boatman with one eye who lay in wait among the willows, and popped out to grab a passenger when any one ventured forth, are all that remains in the memory regarding Cadenabbia.

A few extracts from Lavinia's note-book may be found useful at this point, both as a speedy way of getting our travellers to Rome, and for the bold criticisms on famous places and pictures which they contain: —

"Milan. — Cathedral like a big wedding-cake. 'Last Supper' in the barracks — did not 'thrill;' tried to, but couldn't, as the picture is so dim it can hardly be seen. Ambrosian Library. — Lock of L. Borgia's hair; tea-colored and coarse. Don't believe in it a bit. Jolly old books, but couldn't touch 'em. Fine window to Dante. Saw cathedral illuminated; very theatrical, and much howling of people over the deputies from Rome. Don't know why they illumi-

nated or why they howled; didn't ask. Men here handsome, but rude. Women wear veils and no bonnets, — fat and ugly. Gloves very good. Arch of Peace. — More peace and less arch would be better for Italy.

"Raphael's Marriage of the Virgin. — Stiff and stupid. Can't like Raphael. Dear, pious, simple, old Fra Angelico suits me better.

"To the Public Garden with A.; saw a black ostrich with long pink legs, who pranced and looked so like an opera dancer that we sat on the fence and shrieked with laughter.

"Pavia. — To the Certosa to see the old Carthusian Convent founded in 1396; cloisters, gardens, and twenty-four little dwellings, with chapel, bedroom, parlor, and yard for each monk, who is never to speak, and comes out but once a week. A nice way for lazy men to spend their lives when there is so much work to be done for the Lord and his poor! Wanted to shake them all round, though they did look well in their gowns and cowls gliding about the dim cloisters and church. Perhaps they are kept for that purpose.

"Parma. — Dome of church frescoed by Cor-

reggio. All heaven upsidedown; fat angels turning somersaults, saints like butchers, and martyrs simpering feebly. Like C.'s babies much better. Heaven can't be painted, and they'd better not try. Madonna, by Girolamo, was lovely. Room of the Abbess, with rosy children peeping through the lattice, very charming. Madonna della Scodella — the boy Christ very beautiful. The old Farnese Theatre most interesting; got a scrap of canvas from a mouldy scene. Dead old place is Parma.

"Bologna. — Drove in a pelting rain to the Academy, and saw many pictures. A Pietà, by Guido, was very striking. The desolate mother, with her dead son on her knees, haunted me long afterward. St. Jerome and the infant Christ, by Elisabeth Sirani, I liked. Raphael won't suit yet. Sad for me, but I cannot admire Madonnas with faces like fashion-plates, or dropsical babies with no baby sweetness about them.

"Florence. — Bought furs. Nice climate to bring invalids into. Always did think Italy a humbug, and I begin to see I was right. Acres of pictures. Like about six out of the lot. Can't bear the Venus, or Titian's famous hussy hanging over it. Like his

portraits much. Busts of Roman emperors great fun. Such bad heads! The Julias, Faustinas, and Agrippinas, with hair dressed like a big sponge on the brow, were so comical I was never tired of looking at them. I see now where the present bedlamite style of coiffure comes from.

"The philosophers, &c., were very interesting. Cicero so like Wendell Phillips that I could hardly help clapping my hands and saying, 'Hear! hear!'

"Gave A. a sad blow by saying the Campanile looked like an inlaid work-box. Did not admire it half so much as I did a magnificent stone pine. Best of all, saw in the old Monastery of St. Marco many works of Fra Angelico. I love his pictures, for he put his pious heart into them, and one sees and feels it, and I don't care if his saints do have six joints to their fingers and impossible noses. A very dear picture of 'Providenza,'—poor monks at an empty table and angels bringing bread.

"Angelico's picture of heaven was more to my mind than any I have seen. No stern, avenging God, no silly Madonna, but happy souls playing like children, or singing and piping with devout energy.

"Relics of Savonarola,—his cell, bust, beads, hair-

cloth shirt, and a bit of wood from the pile on which they burnt him. I like relics of one man who really lived, worked, and suffered, better than armies of angels, or acres of gods and goddesses.

"Pleasant drives. Saw artists, Casa Guidi windows, and a model baby house with dolly's name on the door, and steps modelled by hands that have made famous statues. 'Papa's baby house' was best of all his works to me. A nice little earthquake and a trifle of snow to enhance the charms of this sweet spot.

"Visited Parker's grave, and was afflicted to find it in such an unlovely, crowded cemetery. It does not matter after all: his best monument is in the hearts that love him and the souls he fed. As I stood there a little brown bird hopped among the vines that covered the grave, pecked its breakfast from a dry seed-pod, perched on the head-stone with a grateful twitter, as grace after meat, and flew away, leaving me comforted by the little sermon it had preached."

"I don't wish to hurt your feelings, dear, but if this is Rome I must say it is a very nasty place,"

began Lavinia, as they went stumbling through the mud and confusion of a big, unfinished station on their arrival at the eternal city.

"People of sense don't judge a place at ten o'clock of a pitch-dark, rainy night, especially if they are hungry, tired, and, excuse me, love, rather cross," returned Amanda, severely, as they piled into a carriage and drove to Piazza di Spagna.

"I see a divine fountain! A splendid palace! Now it's a statue of some sort! I do believe that dark figure was a monk! I know I shall like it in spite of every thing," cried Matilda excitedly, flattening her nose against the window.

She had been much disappointed at not being able to enter Rome by daylight, so that she might clasp her hands and cry aloud, half stifled with the overpowering emotions of the moment, "Roma! Roma! the eternal city bursts upon my view!" That was the proper thing to do, and it was a blow to make so commonplace and ignoble an entry into the city of her dreams.

Early next morning, Livy was roused from slumber by cries of delight, and, starting up, beheld her artist sister wrapped in a dressing-gown, with dishevelled

hair, staring out of the window, and murmuring incoherently, —

"Spanish Steps, that's where the models sit. Propaganda, famous Jesuit school. Hope I shall see the little students in their funny hats and gowns. That's the great monument thing put up to settle the Immaculate Conception fuss. Very fine, but the apostles look desperately tired of holding it up. Dear old houses! Heavens! there's a *trattoria* man with somebody's breakfast on his head! Don't see any costumes. Where are the sheepskin suits? the red skirts and white head-cloths? Girl with flowers. Oh, how lovely! Mercy on us, there's an officer staring up here, and I never saw him!"

In came the blond head, and the blue dressing-gown vanished from the eyes of the handsome soldier who had been attitudinizing with his high boots, gray and scarlet cloak, jingling sword, and becoming *barrette* cap, for the especial benefit of the enraptured stranger.

"Livy, it is just superb! Get up and come out at once. It is clouding up, and I must have one look or lose my mind," said Matilda, flying about with unusual energy.

"You will have to get used to rain if you stay here long, my child," returned the Raven.

And she was right. It poured steadily for two months, with occasional flurries of snow, also thunder, likewise hurricanes, the tramontàna, the sirocco, and all the other charming features of an Italian winter. That nothing might be wanting, a nice little inundation was got up for their benefit, December 28th.

Sitting peacefully at breakfast on the morning of that day, in their cosey apartment, with a fire of cones and olive-wood cheerily burning on the hearth, Jokerella, the big cat, purring on the rug, the little coffee-pot proudly perched among bread and butter, eggs and fruit, while the ladies, in dressing-gowns and slippers, lounged luxuriously in arm-chairs, one red, one blue, one yellow; they (the ladies, not the chairs) were startled by Agrippina, the maid, who burst into the room like a bomb-shell, announcing, all in one breath, that the Tiber had risen, inundated the whole city, and instant death was to be the doom of all.

Rushing to the window to see if the flood had quite covered the steps, and cut off all retreat, the friends were comforted to observe no signs of water,

except that half frozen in the basin of the fountain above which leaned their favorite old Triton, with an icicle on the end of his nose.

"I must go and attend to this. The poor will suffer; we may be able to help," said Livy, forgetting her bones, and beginning to scramble on her fur boots, as if the safety of the city depended on her.

The others followed suit, and leaving Jokerella to ravage the table, they hurried forth to see what Father Tiber was up to. A most reprehensible prank, apparently, for the lower parts of the city were under water, and many of the great streets already as full of boats as Venice.

The Corso was a deep and rapid stream, and the shopkeepers were disconsolately paddling about, trying to rescue their property.

"Our dresses, our beautiful new dresses, where are they now!" wailed the girls, surveying Mazzoni's grand store, with water up to the balcony, where many milliners wrung their hands, lamenting.

The Piazza del Popolo was a lake, with the four stone lions just visible, and still spouting water, though it was a drug in the market. In at the open

gate rolled a muddy stream, bearing hay-stacks, brushwood, and drowned animals along the Corso. People stood on their balconies wondering what they should do, many breakfastless; for how could the *trattoria* boys safely waft their coffee-pots across such canals of water. Carriages splashed about in shallower parts with agitated loads, hurrying to drier quarters; many were coming down ladders into boats, and crowds stood waiting their turn with bundles of valuables in their hands.

The soldiers were out in full force, working gallantly to save life and property; making rafts, carrying people on their backs, and going through the inundated streets with boat-loads of food for the hungry, shut up in their ill-provided houses. Usually at such times the priests did this work; but now they stood idly looking on, and saying it was a judgment on the people for their treatment of the Pope. The people were troubled because the priests refused to pray for them: but otherwise they snapped their fingers at the sullen old gentlemen in the Vatican; and the brisk, brave troops worked for the city quite as well (the heretics thought better) than the snuffy priests.

In the Ghetto the disaster was truly terrible, for the flood came so suddenly that the whole quarter was under water in an hour. The scene was pitiful; for here the Jews live, packed like sardines in a box, and, being washed out with no warning, were utterly destitute. In one street a man and woman were seen wading up to their waists in water, pushing an old mattress before them, on which were three little children, all they had saved.

Later in the day, as boats of provisions came along, women and children swarmed at the windows, crying, "Bread! bread!" and their wants could not be supplied in spite of the care of the city authorities. One old woman who had lost every thing besought the rescuers to bring her a little snuff for the love of heaven; which was very characteristic of the race. One poor man, in trying to save a sick wife and his little ones in a cart, upset them, and the babies were drowned at their own door. Comedy and tragedy side by side.

Outside the city, houses were carried off, people lost, and bridges swept away, so sudden and violent was the flood. The heavy rains and warm winds melted the snow on the mountains, and

swelled the river till it rose higher than at any time since 1805.

Many strangers who came to Rome for the Christmas holidays sat in their fine apartments, without food, fire, light, or company till taken off in boats or supplied by hoisting stores in at the windows.

"We can hold out some time as we live on a hill, and Pina has laid in provisions for several days. But if the flood lasts we shall come to want; for the wood-yards are under water, the railroads down, and the peasants can't get into the city to bring supplies, unless the donkeys swim," said Amanda, reviewing the situation.

"Never mind; it's so exciting; only we must not forget that we engaged to go and see the Roastpig Aurora to-day," answered Matilda, who insisted on pronouncing Rospigliosi in that improper manner.

"I like this infinitely better than any of your picturesque refrigerators, and it thrills me more to watch one of those dear, dirty soldiers save women and babies than to see a dozen 'Dying Gladiators' gasping for centuries in immortal marble," added Lavinia, who had shocked her artistic friends by

sniffing at the famous statue, and wishing the man would die and done with it, and not lie squirming there.

"Come away, Mat: she has no soul for art, and it is all in vain to try and breathe one into her," said Amanda, with the calm pity of one who had read up every great picture, studied up every famous statue, and knew what to admire, when to thrill, and just where the various emotions should come in.

So they left the outcast perched on a wall, waving her muff at them, and calling out, "Nater for ever!" to the great horror of an English lady, who would have seen all Rome upset without any unseemly excitement.

That night the gas gave out, and mysterious orders were left at houses for lamps to be kept burning till morning. Thieves abounded, and the ladies prepared their arms, one pistol, one dagger, and a large umbrella, then slept peacefully, undisturbed by the commotion in the kitchen, where cats, live chickens, and Pina's five grandmothers, all lived together, rent free.

Amanda's last prediction was, that they would find themselves gently floating out at the Porta Pia

about midnight. Mat wailed for a submerged gallery in which she had hoped to ice herself on the morrow, and Livy indulged the sinful hope that the Pope would get his pontifical petticoats very wet, be a little drowned, and terribly scared by the flood, because he spoilt the Christmas festivities, and shut up all the cardinals' red coaches.

Next day the water began to abate, and people made up their minds that the end of the world was not yet. Gentlemen paid visits on the backs of stout soldiers, ladies went shopping in boats, and family dinners were handed in at two-story windows without causing any remark, so quickly do people adapt themselves to the inevitable.

Hardly had the watery excitement subsided when a new event set the city in an uproar.

The king was not expected till the tenth of January; but the kind soul could not wait, and, as soon as the road was passable, he came with 300,000 francs in his hands to see what he could do for his poor Romans. He arrived at 4 A.M., and though unexpected the news flew through the city, and a crowd turned out with torches to escort him to the Quirinal.

Again did the explosive Pina burst in upon her mistresses with the news, this time in tears of joy, for the people began to think the King would never come, and therefore were especially touched by this prompt visit in the midst of their trouble. The handsome damsel was a spectacle herself, so dramatic was she as she shook her fist at the Pope, and cheered for the King, with a ladle in one hand, an artichoke in the other, her fine eyes flashing, and her mellow voice trembling, while she talked regardless of the *polenta* going to destruction in the frying-pan.

On went the bonnets, out flew the ladies, and rushed up to the Quirinal where stood a great crowd waiting eagerly for a sight of the King.

There was a great bustle among the officials, and splendid creatures in new uniforms, ran about in all directions. Grand carriages arrived, bringing the high and mighty, gaping but loyal, to greet their lord. General Marmora, a thin, shabby, energetic man, was everywhere; for the new order of things seemed a little hitchy. Dorias and Collonnas gladdened plebeian eyes, and the people cheered every thing, from the Commander-in-Chief to somebody's breakfast, borne through the crowd by a stately

"Jeames" in livery, who graciously acknowledged the homage.

For one mortal hour our ladies stood in a pelting rain, and then retired, feeling that the sacrifice of their best hats was all that could reasonably be expected of free-born Americans. They consoled themselves by putting out Pina's fine Italian banner (made in secret, and kept ready for her King, for the *padrona* was *papalino*), and supporting it by two little American flags, the stars and stripes of which much perplexed the boys and donkeys, disporting themselves in the Piazza Barberini.

But the excitement was so infectious that the girls could not resist another run after royalty; so, while Livy consoled herself with the fire and the cat, they took a carriage and chased the King till they caught him at the Capitol. They had a fine view of him as he came down the long steps, almost alone, and at the peril of his life, through a mass of people cheering frantically, and whitening the streets with waving handkerchiefs.

The enthusiastic damsels mounted up beside the driver, and hurrahed with all their hearts and voices, as well they might, for it certainly was a sight to

see. The courage of the King, in trusting himself in a city full of enemies, touched the people quite as much as the kindly motive that brought him there, and kept him sacred in their eyes.

The girls had a second view of him on the balcony of the Quirinal; for the populace clamored so for another sight of "Il Rè" that the Pope's best velvet hangings were hastily spread, and Victor Emmanuel came out and bowed to his people, "who stood on their heads with joy," as Amanda expressed it.

He was in citizen's dress, and looked like a stout, brown, soldierly man, not so ugly as the pictures of him, but not an Apollo by any means.

Hating ceremony and splendor, he would not have the fine apartments prepared for him, but chose a plain room, saying, "Keep the finery for my son if you like: I prefer this."

He drove through the Ghetto, and all the desolated parts of the city, to see with his own eyes the ruin made; and then desired the city fathers to give to the poor the money they had set apart to make a splendid welcome for him.

He only spent one day, and returned to Florence at night. All Rome was at the station to see him

off: ladies with carriages full of flowers, troops of soldiers, and throngs of poor people blessing him like a saint; for this kingly sympathy of his had won all hearts.

"When he does make his grand entry, we will decorate our balcony, and have our six windows packed with loyal Yankees who will hurrah their best for 'the honest man,' as they call Victor Emmanuel, and that is high praise for a king."

So said the three, and while waiting for the event (which did not occur in their day, however), they indulged in all the pastimes modern Rome afforded. They shivered through endless galleries, getting "cricks" in their necks staring at frescos, and injuring their optic nerves poring over pictures so old that often nothing was visible but a mahogany-colored leg, an oily face, or the dim outline of a green saint in a whirlwind of pink angels.

They grubbed in catacombs and came up mouldy. They picnicked in the tomb of Cæcelia Metella, flirted in the palace of the Cæsars, — not in the classical manner, however, — got cold by moonlight in the Colosseum, and went sketching in the Baths of Caracalla, which last amusement generally ended in the

gentlemen and ladies drawing each other, and returning delighted with the study of art in "dear Rome."

They went to fancy parties where artists got themselves up like their own statues and pictures, and set mediæval fashions which it was a pity the rest of the world did not follow. They drank much social tea with titled beings, as thick as blackberries, and, better still, men and women who had earned nobler names for themselves with pencil, pen, or chisel. They paid visits in palaces where the horses lived in the basement, rich foreigners on the first floor, artists next, and princes in the attic.

They went to the hunt and saw scarlet coats, fine horses, bad riding, many hounds, and no foxes.

As a change they got up game-parties *à la* Little Athens in their own small *salon*, introduced the Potato Pantomime, had charades, and enacted the immortal Jarley's waxworks on one of the Seven Hills.

A true Yankee breakfast of fishballs, johnny-cake, and dip toast, was given in their honor, and its delights much enhanced by its being eaten in a lovely room with reeds and rushes on the pale-green walls, shell-shaped chairs, and coral mirror-frames. What a thing it was to consume those familiar

viands in a famous palace, with Guido's Cenci downstairs, a great sculptor next door, three lovely boys as waiters, and "Titian T." to head the feast, and follow it up with dates from the Nile, and Egyptian sketches that caused the company to vote a speedy adjournment to the land "of corkendills" and pyramids.

These and many other joys they tasted, and when all else palled upon them they drove on the Campagna and were happy.

It is sad to be obliged to record that these quiet drives were the especial delight of the unsocial Lavinia, whose ill-regulated mind soon wearied of swell society, classical remains, and artistic revelry. Ancient Rome would have suited her excellently, she thought; but modern Rome was such a chaos of frivolity and fanaticism, poverty and splendor, dirt and deviltry, dead grandeur and living ignorance, that she felt as if shut up in a magnificent tomb, the bad air of which was poisoning both body and soul.

Her only consolation was the new freedom that seemed to blow over Rome like a wholesome wind. Old residents lamented the loss of the priestly pageants, *fêtes*, and ceremonies; but this republican

spinster preferred to see Rome guarded by her own troops, and governed by her own King, who ordered streets to be cleaned, fountains filled, schools opened, and all good institutions made possible, rather than any amount of Papal purple covering poverty, ignorance, and superstition. Better than the sight of all the red coaches that ever rumbled was the spectacle of many boys quitting the Jesuit college and demanding admittance into the free schools; and sweeter than the music of all the silver trumpets that ever blew were the voices of happy men and women singing once forbidden songs of liberty in the streets of Rome.

These sentiments, and others equally unfashionable, were only breathed into the ear of sister Matilda when the two retired to the Campagna to confide to one another the secrets of their souls; a process necessary about once a week; for, after visiting studios, going to parties, and telling polite fibs about every thing they saw, it was impossible to exist without finding a vent of some sort. Once out among the aqueducts, Matilda could freely own that she thought genius a rare article in the studios where she expected to learn so much; and Lavinia

could make the awful avowal that parties at which the order of performance was, gossip, tea, music; then music, tea, and gossip, all together, — were not her idea of intellectual society. Their criticisms on pictures and statues cannot be recorded without covering their humble names with infamy, and why the sky did not fall upon or the stones rise up and smite these Vandals is a mystery to this day.

They did enjoy much in their own improper manner, but poor Amanda's sufferings can better be imagined than described. So when Lavinia, early in March proposed to flee to the mountains before they became quite demoralized, and learned to steal and stab, as well as lie and lounge, she readily assented, and they retired to Albano.

"The decline and fall of the Roman Empire was nothing to this, and never have I seen such unappreciative women as you two," sighed Amanda, as they rolled away from Numero Due Piazza Barberini, leaving Agrippina sobbing at the top of the stairs and the *padrona* bobbing little curtsies at the bottom.

"I am sure the Cenci will haunt me all my days, and so will many other famous things," said Matilda

while her eye roved fondly from a very brown Capuchin monk to a squad of Bersaglieri trotting by with jaunty cock's feathers dancing in the wind, muskets gleaming, and trim boots skipping through the mud with martial regularity.

"When I get the contents of my head sorted out, I shall doubtless rejoice that I have seen Rome; but just now all that I can clearly recall are the three facts that the Pope had a fit, our dear man Romeo got very tipsy one night, and that we went to see the Sistine Chapel the day the eclipse made it as dark as a pocket. Yes," continued Lavinia, with an air of decision, "I *am* glad to have seen this classical cesspool, and still more glad to have got out of it alive," she added, sniffing the air from the mountains, as if the odor of sanctity which pervaded the holy city did not suit her.

It blew great guns up at Albano, and the society consisted chiefly of donkeys. But the ladies enjoyed themselves nevertheless, and felt better and better every day; for early hours, much exercise, and no æsthetic tea, soon set them up after the dissipation of the winter.

Three pleasing events diversified their stay. The

first happened the day after they arrived. The girls went forth early to look about them, and to see if they could find a little apartment where all could be more comfortable than in the breezy rooms at the hotel. Following the grassy road that winds down the valley below the viaduct, they came to a lovely garden, and, finding the gate open, went in. A queer old villa was perched on the hill above, and a manly form was observed to be leaning from a balcony as if enjoying the fine view from the height.

"I fancied that house was empty, or we wouldn't have come in. Never mind: we won't go back now, and if any one comes after us we will apologize and say we lost our way going to Ajaccio," said Amanda as they went calmly forward among the posy-beds that lay blooming on the hill-side.

It was well they prepared themselves, for the manly form suddenly disappeared from the balcony, and a moment afterward came swiftly toward them through the shrubs.

A comely young gentleman, who greeted them with Italian grace, accepted their apology smiling, and begged them to walk in his garden whenever they liked. It was always open, he said, and the

peasants often used that path, admiring but never hurting a leaf. Hearing that they were in search of an apartment, he instantly begged them to come up and look at some rooms in the villa. His father was a refugee from France, and desired to let a part of his house. Come and behold these delightful rooms.

So charming was the interest he took in the errant damsels that they could not resist, and after rolling up their eyes at one another to express their enjoyment of the adventure, they graciously followed the handsome youth into the villa.

With confiding hospitality he took them everywhere, — into his mother's room, the kitchen, and nursery. In the latter place they found two small boys who bore such a striking resemblance to Napoleon First that the girls spoke of it, and were enraptured at the reply they received.

"Truly yes: we belong to the family. My mother is a Buonaparte, my father Count ——"

"Here's richness and romance!" "What *will* Livy say?" whispered the girls to one another, as their guide left them in the *salon* and went to find his father.

"She will scold us for coming here," said Amanda, remembering her own lectures on the proprieties.

"Yes; but she will forgive us the minute we say Napoleon, for that bad little man is one of her heroes," added Mat, pretending to be admiring the view, while she privately examined a lady in a bower below. A stout, dark lady with all the family traits so strongly marked that there could be no doubt of the young man's assertion.

Presently he came back with an affable old gentleman who evidently had an eye to the main chance; for, in spite of his elegance and affability, he asked a great price for his rooms, and felt that any untitled stranger should be glad to pay well for the honor of living under the roof of a Buonaparte.

Amanda left the decision to her invisible duenna, and with a profusion of compliments and thanks, they got away, being gallantly escorted to the gate by the young count, who filled their hands with flowers, and gazed pensively after them, as if he found the society of two bright American girls very agreeable after that of his lofty parents, or the peasants of the town.

Home they ran and bounced in upon Livy, bloom-

ing and breathless, to pour out their tale, and suggest an immediate departure to the blissful spot where counts and crocuses flourished with Italian luxuriance.

But after the first excitement had subsided, Lavinia put a wet blanket on the entire plan by declaring that she would never board with any grasping old patrician, who would charge for every bow, and fall back on his ancestors if he was found cheating. She would go and look at the place, but not enter it, nor be beholden to the resident Apollo for so much as a dandelion.

So the mourning damsels led the griffin over the viaduct, through the dirty little town, by the villa on its least attractive side. Up at the window were the two little Napoleonic heads with big, black eyes, strong chins, and dark hair streaked across wide, olive-colored foreheads. A vision of Papa was visible in the garden pruning a vine with gloves on his aristocratic hands, and a shabby velvet coat on his highly connected back. Also, afar off on the balcony, — oh, sight to touch a maiden's heart! — was the young count gazing wistfully toward Albano. He did not see the charmers as they crept down the

rough road close to the garden wall, and went sadly home, along the blooming path to the "Tomb of the Four Thimbles," as Livy irreverently called the ruin, which has an ornament at each of its corners like a gigantic thimble of stone.

A note in Amanda's most elegant French, declining the apartment in the name of Madame Duenna, closed the door of this Eden upon the wandering peris, who entered never more. Now and then as they went clattering by on their donkeys to Lake Nemi, or some other picturesque spot,

> They saw again the crocus bloom,
> And, leaning from that lofty room,
> Sir Launcelot with face of gloom
> Look down to Camelot.
> Up flew their veils and floated wide,
> But Livy pinned them to her side,
> "The curse has come upon us!" cried
> The ladies of Shalott.

The second adventure befell Amanda alone, and in this wise.

Going one day to Rome, on business, she found herself shut up in a car with a gorgeous officer and a meek young man, who read papers all the way. The tall soldier in his gray and silver uniform, with

a furred, frogged, and braided jacket, not to mention the high boots and spurs, or the becoming cap, was so very polite to the lone lady that she could not remain dumb without positive rudeness. So Amanda conversed in her most charming manner, finding inspiration, doubtless, in the dark eyes and musical voice of her handsome *vis-à-vis*, for the officers from Turin are things of beauty and joys for ever to those who love to look on manly men.

Among other things, the two had a little joke about the Baron Rothschild, who rode about Albano on a tiny donkey with two servants behind him, also the Baroness, a painfully plain woman with an ugly dog, the image of herself.

When they arrived at Rome, however, their joke was turned against them, by the discovery that the meek man was the Baron's secretary, who would doubtless repeat their chat at head-quarters. To see the handsome man slap his brow, and then laugh like a boy at the fun, was worth a longer journey, Amanda thought, as he put her into a carriage, gave her his best martial salute, and went clanking away about his own affairs.

Amanda returned at 4 P.M., and her emotions may

be imagined when the dark face of her officer peered in at the car window, and the melodious voice asked if he might be permitted to enter. Of course he might; and, as no secretary now spoilt the *tête-à-tête*, Mars became delightfully confidential, and poured his woes into the sympathizing bosom of Amanda.

It had been a great affliction to him that his regiment was quartered at Albano for some months. *Mio Dio!* so dull was it life had already become a burden; but now, if the Signorina was to be there, if she permitted him to make himself known to her party, what joys were in store for him. The Signorina loved to ride. Behold he had superb horses languishing in the stables, that henceforth were dedicated to her use. His fellow officers were gentlemen of good family, brave as lions, and dying of *ennui:* if they might be presented to the ladies, life would be worth having, and Albano a Paradise, &c.

To all this devotion the prudent Amanda listened with pleasure, but promised nothing till Signore Mars had made the acquaintance of certain American gentlemen and married ladies, then it would be possible to enjoy the delights of which he spoke. The Colonel vowed he would instantly devote him-

self to this task, and thus they came to the lonely little station at Albano.

Amanda had ordered the carriage to meet her; but it was not there, and she was forced to wait till all her fellow passengers were gone. All but the gallant officer, who decorously remained outside, marching to and fro as if on guard, till his servant came with his horse. Then he begged to be allowed to see why the carriage did not come, and Amanda consented, for night was falling, and two miles of mud lay between her and home.

Away dashed the servant, but his master did not follow: standing in the doorway he declared that he must remain as the Signorina's protector, for no trains were due for hours, the depot man was gone, and it was too late for any lady to stay there alone. Again, Amanda gratefully consented, wondering what would be the end of her adventure. And again, the stately Colonel resumed his march outside, singing as he tramped, and evidently enjoying the escort duty that gave him so good an opportunity of displaying not only his gallantry, but his fine voice and handsome figure.

Down rattled the carriage at last, accompanied, to

Amanda's dismay, by three of the Colonel's friends, who had evidently received a hint of the affair, and had come to have a hand in it.

With much bowing of the gentlemen, and much prancing of their fine horses, Amanda was handed to her seat, and went lumbering back to the hotel with her splendid escort careering about her, to the great edification of the town.

When the rescued damsel told the tale to her mates, Matilda tore her hair and lamented that she had not been there. Even the stern Livy had no lecture for the erring lamb, but was as full of interest as either of the girls, for any thing in the shape of a soldier was dear to her heart.

When the ladies rode forth next day three elegant St. Georges in full rig saluted as these modern Unas ambled by on their meek donkeys, — a performance punctually executed ever afterward whenever the three blue veils appeared. Much curvetting went on before the hotel door; much clanking of spurs and sabres was heard in the little lane on to which the apartment of the ladies looked, and splendid officers seemed to spring up like violets in secluded spots where maidens love to stroll.

It was all very nice; and the girls were beginning to feel that the charms of Albano rivalled those of Rome, when a sad blow upset their castles in the air, and desolated the knights over the way.

The highly respectable Americans who were to serve as the link between the soldiers and the ladies, decidedly declined the office, objecting to the martial gentlemen as being altogether too dangerous to bring into the dove-cot. So the poor dears sighed in vain, and the longing damsels never rode the fine horses that were temptingly paraded before them on all occasions.

They did their best; but it was soon evident to Lavinia that in some unguarded moment the impetuous Mat would yield to the spell and go gambading away for a ride *sans* duenna, *sans* habit, *sans* propriety, *sans* every thing. Amanda likewise seemed losing her head, and permitted the dark-eyed Colonel to talk to her when they met; only a moment, — but what a perilous moment it was! — when this six-foot Mars leaned over a green hedge and talked about the weather in the softest Italian that ever melted a woman's heart.

"I'm going to Venice next week; so you may as

well make up your minds to it, girls. I *cannot* bear this awful responsibility any longer; for I am very sure you will both be off to Turin with those handsome rascals if we stay much longer. My mind is made up, and I won't hear a word."

Thus Lavinia, with a stern countenance; for the romantic old lady felt the charm as much as the girls did, and decided that discretion was the better part of valor for the whole party.

"I should never dare to go home and tell my honored parents that Mat had run away with a man as handsome as Jove, and as poor as Job. Amanda's indignant relatives would rise up and stone me if I let her canter into matrimony with the fascinating Colonel, who may have a wife and ten children in Turin, for all we know. They *must* be torn away at once, or my character as duenna is lost for ever."

Having made up her mind, Livy steeled her heart to all appeals, and wrote letters, packed trunks, and watched her little flock like a vigilant sheep dog.

How she would ever have got them through that last week is very uncertain, if a providential picnic had not helped her.

A fair was held in the town, and a delightful surprise-party was got up among the artists of Rome. Twenty-five came driving over in a big carriage, with four gaily decorated horses, postilions, hampers of lunch, flutes and horns, and much jollity bottled up for the occasion.

A very festive spectacle they made as they drove through the narrow streets with flowers and streamers in their hats, singing and joking in true artistic style.

They meant to have lunched in the open air; but, as it was cloudy, decided to spread the feast at the hotel. Such a delightful revel as followed! A scene from the "Decameron," modernized, would give some idea of it; for after the banquet all adjourned to the gardens of the Doria Villa, and there disported themselves as merrily as if all the plagues of life were quite forgotten, and death itself among the lost arts. Flirting and dancing, charades and singing, stories and statues, poems and pictures, gossip and gambols, absorbed the hours as pleasantly as in the olden time. And if the costumes were not as picturesque as those in Vedder's fine picture, the ladies were as lovely, the gentlemen as gallant, and

all much better behaved than those of Boccaccio's party.

A few drops of rain quenched the fun at its height, and sent the revellers home as fast as four horses could take them, leaving the town gaping after them, and our ladies much enlivened by the delights of the day.

This third and last event pleasantly ended their sojourn at Albano; for a day or two later they vanished, leaving the dear officers disconsolate till the next batch of travelling ladies came to comfort their despair.

A week was spent in Venice, floating about all day from one delightful old church to another, or paying visits to Titians and Tintorettos; buying little turtles, photographs, or Venetian glass; eating candied fruit and seeing the doves fed in the square of San Marco; visiting shops full of dusty antiquities, or searching the stalls on the Rialto for Moor's-head rings; being rowed to the Lido by Giacomo in a red sash; and lulled to sleep at night by the songs of a chorus that floated under the windows in the moonlight.

Lavinia never could get used to seeing the

butcher, the baker, and the postman go their rounds in boats. Matilda was in bliss, with a gondola all to herself, where she sat surrounded with water-colours, trying to paint every thing she saw; for here the energy she had lost at Rome seemed to return to her. Amanda haunted a certain shop, trying to make the man take a reasonable sum for a very ancient and ugly bit of jewelry, which she called "a sprigalario," for want of a better name; and after each failure she went off to compose herself with a visit to the Doges.

Of course they all saw the Bridge of Sighs and the dungeons below, with their many horrors; likewise a Mass at St. Mark's, where the Patriarch was a fat old soul in red silk, even to his shoes and holy pocket-handkerchief; and the service appeared to consist in six purple priests dressing and undressing him like an old doll, while a dozen white-gowned boys droned up in a gold cock-loft, and many beggars whined on the dirty floor below.

Do other travellers eat locusts, I wonder, as ours did one sunny day, sitting on church steps, and discover that the food of the Apostle was not the insect whose "zeeing" foretells hot weather; but

the long, dry pods of the locust-tree, sweet to the taste, but rather "dry fodder," as the impious Livy remarked after choking herself with a quarter of a yard of it.

When the week was up Mat implored to be left behind with Angela, the maid, and Brio, a big poodle possessed of the devil. But she was torn away, and only consoled by the promise of many new gloves, with as many buttons as she pleased, when they got to Munich.

"The lakes are the proper entrance to Italy, and Venice a lovely exit. One soon tires of it, and is ready to leave, which is an excellent arrangement, though I should prefer to depart in some more cheerful vehicle than a hearse," observed Lavinia, as they left the long, black gondola at the steps of the station.

"Haven't you a sigh for those lovely lakes, a tear for Albano, a pang of regret for Rome?" asked Amanda, hoping to wring one moan for Italy from the old lady.

"Not a sigh, not a tear, not a regret. I find I like them all better the farther I get from them, and by the time I am at home I may be able to say 'I

adore them, but I doubt it," returned the incorrigible Livy, and from that moment Amanda regarded her granny as one dead to all the dear delusions of antiquity.

VI.

LONDON.

"FROM this moment I cease to be the commander-in-chief. Livy adores England, can speak the language, understands the money, and knows all about London; so *she* shall be leader, and I will repose after my long labor." With this remark, Amanda retired from office, covered with glory, and her mates voted to erect a statue in her honor as a token of their undying gratitude.

Lavinia took the lead from the moment they landed at St. Catherine's Wharf, and though somewhat demoralized by a rough passage of eighteen hours from Antwerp, was equal to the occasion. She did love England, and thought London the most delightful city in the world, next to Boston. Its mud and fog were dear to her; its beef and beer were nectar and ambrosia, after the continental slops and messes; its steady-going, respectable

citizens beautiful in her eyes, and the words "home" and "comfort" were not an idle mockery here.

Therefore the old lady joyfully sniffed the smoky air, gazed with tenderness on the grimy houses, and cast herself, metaphorically speaking, into the arms of a stout, ruddy-faced porter, as if at last she had found a man and a brother.

Nobly did the burly Briton repay her confidence and earn the shilling, which in England makes all things possible. He bore them to the station, got tickets, checked luggage, put the ladies in a first-class compartment, gave them all necessary directions about the hotel they were after, and when the bell rang touched his cap with a smile upon his dear, red face, which caused Lavinia to add a sixpence to the shilling she gave him with a mental blessing.

"This is truly a decent country. See how well one is cared for, how civil everybody is, how honest, how manly," began Livy, as she mounted her hobby, and prepared for a canter over the prejudices of her friend; for Amanda detested England because she knew nothing of it.

"The cabman cheated us, asking double fares,"

replied the dear girl, wrapping herself in many cloaks and refusing to admire the fog.

"Not at all," cried Livy; "the trunks were immense, and you'll find we shall have to pay extra for them everywhere. It is the same as having them weighed and paying for the pounds, only this saves much time and trouble. Look at the handsome guard in his silver-plated harness. How much nicer he is than a gabbling Italian, or a Frenchman who compliments you one minute and behaves like a brute the next! It does my soul good to see the clean, rosy faces, and hear good English instead of gibberish."

"Never in my life have I seen such tall, fine-looking men, only they are all fair, which isn't my style," observed Matilda, with a secret sigh for the dark-eyed heroes from Turin.

Thus conversing they soon came to the G—— Hotel just at the end of the railway, and without going out of the station found themselves settled in comfortable rooms.

"Regard, if you please, these toilette arrangements, — two sorts of bath-pan, two cans of cold water, one of hot, two big pitchers, much soap, and six towels about the size of table-cloths. I call that

an improvement on the continental cup, saucer, and napkin accommodation," said Lavinia, proudly displaying a wash-stand that looked like a dinner-table laid for a dozen, such was the display of glass, china, and napery.

"The English certainly are a clean people," replied Amanda, softening a little as she remembered her fruitless efforts to find a bath-pan in Brittany, where the people said the drought was caused by the English using so much water.

"They need more appliances for cleanliness than any other race, because they live in such a dirty country," began Matilda, removing the soot from her face in flakes.

What more she might have said is unknown; for Livy closed her mouth with a big sponge, and all retired to repose after the trials of the past night.

"Now, my dears, you shall have food fit for Christian women to eat. No weak soup, no sour wine, no veal stewed with raisins, nor greasy salad made of all the weeds that grow. Beef that will make you feel like giants, and beer that will cheer the cockles of your hearts; not to mention cheese which will make you wink, and bread with a little round

button atop of the loaf like the grand Panjandrum in the old story."

Thus Lavinia enthusiastically, as she led her flock of two into the eating-room at luncheon time. Being seated at a little table by one of the great windows, the old lady continued to sing the praises of Britannia while waiting for the repast.

"Isn't this better than a stone-floored *café*, with nine clocks all wrong, seven mirrors all cracked, much drapery all dirty, a flock of tousled *garçons* who fly about like lunatics, and food which I shudder to think of? Look at this lofty room; this grave, thick carpet; that cheerful coal-fire; these neat little tables; these large, clean windows; these quiet, ministerial waiters, who seem to take a paternal interest in your wants, and best of all in this simple, wholesome, well-cooked food."

Here the arrival of a glorified beefsteak and a shining pint-pot of foaming ale gave an appropriate finish to Livy's lecture. She fell upon her lunch like a famished woman, and was speechless till much meat had vanished, and the ale was low in the pot.

"It *is* good," admitted Amanda, who took to her

beer like a born Englishwoman, and swallowed some of her prejudices with her delicious beef.

"It's such a comfort to know that I am not eating a calf's brains or a pig's feet, that I can enjoy it with a free mind, and the sight of those two beautiful old gentlemen gives it an added relish," said Matilda, who had been watching a pair of hale old fellows eat their lunch in a solid, leisurely way that would have been impossible to an American.

"It is so restful to see people take things calmly, and not bolt their meals, or rush about like runaway steam-engines. It is this moderation that keeps Englishmen so hearty, jolly, and long-lived. They don't tear themselves to pieces as we do, but take time for rest, exercise, food, and recreation like sensible people as they are. It is like reposing on a feather-bed to live here, and my tired nerves rejoice in it," said Lavinia, eating bread and cheese as if that was her mission in life.

"A slight amount of haste will be advisable, my Granny, unless we intend to spend all our substance on these restful comforts of yours. This hotel is delightfully cosey, but expensive; so the quicker we go into lodgings the better for us," suggested the

thrifty Amanda, seeing that Livy was too infatuated to care for cost.

"I'll go the first thing to-morrow and look at the rooms Mrs. Blank recommended to us. This afternoon we will rest and write letters, unless some one comes to call," said Livy, leading her girls to the reading-room, where sleep-inviting chairs, tables supplied with writing materials, and groves of newspapers wooed the stranger to repose.

Hardly were they seated, however, than Jeames brought in the card of a friend who had been told when they would arrive, and hastened at once to meet them. How pleasant is the first familiar face one sees in a strange land! Doubly pleasant was Mr. C.'s because he brought hospitable invitations from other friends, kind welcomes, and tickets to several of the art exhibitions then open.

Hardly had he gone, after a half hour's chat, than another card was handed, and the name it bore caused a slight flutter in the dove-cot. A friend of Miss Livy's, in Boston, had sent orders to his brother in London to devote himself to the wandering ladies when they came. They had never met; the poor man didn't care to have his quiet invaded by strange

women, and to do the honors of London is no small task; yet this heroic gentleman obeyed orders, without a murmur; and, leaving his artistic seclusion, shouldered his burden with the silent courage of a Spartan.

A grave, dark, little man, with fine eyes, quiet manners, and a straight-forward way with him that suited blunt Livy excellently. How he dared to face the three unknown women so calmly, listen to their impossible suggestions so politely, and offer himself as a slave so cheerfully, will for ever remain a mystery to those grateful souls.

His first service was to pack them into a cab and bear them safely to the bankers for letters and money; and this he followed up by several weeks of servitude, which must have been worse than Egyptian bondage.

Two more large ladies joined the party after they were settled in lodgings at Kensington; but, undaunted by the fact, this long-suffering man escorted the whole five to galleries and theatres, trips into the city, and picnics in the country; went shopping with them, lugged parcels, ran errands, paid bills, and was in fact the sheet-anchor of the whole party.

Imagine the emotions of one shy man when called upon to lead a flock of somewhat imposing ladies everywhere; to have two cabs full on all occasions, to be obliged to support the invalids, to follow the caprices of the giddy, to gratify the demands of the curious, and to hear the gabble of the whole five day after day.

Bürger's Brave Man was a coward compared to him; for he not only gave his days, but his evenings also, joining in endless games of whist, drinking much weak tea, and listening to any amount of twaddle on all subjects.

The society was not such as intelligent men enjoy, being composed of two Egyptian boys and three fussy old ladies. One of them was immensely stout, wore a bright green cap, with half a pint of scarlet cherries bobbing on her brow. She talked on all subjects, and handed round an album full of her own poems on all occasions. The second must have been a sister of "Mr. T.'s Aunt," so grim and incoherent was she. Sitting in the corner, she stared at the world around her with an utterly expressionless countenance, and when least expected broke out with some startling remark, such as, "If

that fence had been painted green we should get to heaven sooner," or "Before I had fits my memory was as good as anybody's, but my daughter married a clergyman, and took it with her."

The third antiquity was the hostess, a buxom lady, much given to gay attire and reminiscences of past glory, "Before me 'usband went into public life." The strangers innocently supposed the departed Mr. K. to have been an M.P. at least, and were rather taken aback on learning that he had been a pawnbroker.

The Egyptian youths were handsome, dark lads, with melodious voices, lustrous eyes, and such fiery tempers that one never knew whether they were going to pass the bread or stab one with the carving-knife.

As a slight mitigation of this slow society, the Russian from Pension Paradis appeared with his broadcloth more resplendent than ever. The ladies had seen him in Rome; but the fever scared him away, and he was now fleeing from another lodging house, where the hostess evidently intended to marry him to her daughter, in the MacStinger fashion.

In this varied circle did the devoted being afore-

mentioned pass many hours after the day's hard labor was happily over, and when any one pitied him for leading the life of a galley-slave, he hid his anguish and answered with a smile, —

"My brother told me to do it, and I never disobey Tom. In fact, I find I rather like it."

That last fib was truly sublime, and the name of Casabianca pales before that of one who obeyed fraternal commands to the letter, and tried to love his duty, heavy as it was. If, as has been sometimes predicted, England had gone under just then, it might truly have been said, —

> Though prince and peer and poet rare
> Were sunk among the piles,
> The noblest man who perished there
> Was faithful W. N——s.

The sight-seeing fever raged fiercely at first, and the flock of Americans went from Windsor Castle to the Tower of London, from Westminster Abbey to Madame Taussaud's Waxwork Show with a vigor that appalled the natives. They would visit two or three galleries in the morning, lunch at Dolly's (the dark, little chop-house, which Johnson, Goldsmith, and the other worthies used to frequent in the good old

times), go to Richmond in the afternoon and dine at the Star and Garter, or to Greenwich and eat "white baits fish," as the Russian called that celebrated dish, and finish off the evening at some theatre, getting home at midnight, in a procession of two cabs and a hansom.

When the first excitement was over, Lavinia and Matilda took a turn at society, having friends in London. Amanda could not conquer her prejudices sufficiently to accompany them, and, falling back on the climate as her excuse, stayed at home and improved her mind.

"I feel now like girls in novels. You are the Duchess of Devonshire and I am Lady Maud Plantagenet, going to a ball at Buckingham Palace. I know that I was made to sit in the lap of luxury: it agrees with me so well," said Matilda, as the two rolled away to Aubrey House in a brougham, all lamps, glass, and satin. Her long blue train lay piled up before her, the light flashed on her best Roman earrings, her curls were in their most picturesque array, and — crowning joy of all — cream-colored gloves, with six buttons, covered her arms, and filled her soul with happiness, because they were

so elegant and cost so little, being bought in Rome just after the flood.

Dowager Livy responded gravely from the depths of her silver-gray silk, enlivened with pink azaleas, —

"My child, thank your stars that you are a free-born Yankee, and have no great name or state to keep up. Buckingham Palace is all very well, and I shouldn't mind calling on Mrs. Guelph, or Saxe Coburg, whichever it is, but I much prefer to be going to the house of a Radical M.P., who is lending a hand to all good works. Mrs. T. is a far more interesting woman to me than Victoria, for her life is spent in helping her fellow-creatures. *I* consider her a model Englishwoman, — simple, sincere, and accomplished; full of good sense, intelligence, and energy. Her house is open to all, friend and stranger, black and white, rich and poor. Great men and earnest women meet there: Mazzini and Frances Power Cobbe, John Bright and Jean Ingelow, Rossetti the poet, and Elizabeth Garrett, the brave little doctor. Though wealthy and living in an historical mansion, the host is the most unassuming man in it, and the hostess the simplest dressed lady. Their money goes in other ways, and the chief ornament

of that lovely spot is a school, where poor girls may get an education. Mrs. T. gave a piece of her own garden for it, and teaches there herself, aided by her friends, who serve the poor girls like mothers and sisters, and help to lift them up from the slough of despond in which so many sink. That beats any thing you'll find in Buckingham Palace, sister Mat."

"If they want a drawing teacher I'll offer myself, for I think that is regularly splendid," said Matilda warmly, as Livy paused for breath after her harangue.

With these new ideas in her head, Lady Maud enjoyed her party, while the Duchess revelled in radicals to her heart's content; for Aubrey House was their head-quarters, and all were out in full force. It was cheering to our spinster to find that things had moved a good deal since a former visit five or six years before, when Mill had carried into the House of Commons a Woman's Rights petition that filled both arms. People laughed then, and the stout-hearted women laughed also, but said, "Our next petition shall be so big it will have to go in a wheelbarrow." Now the same people

talked over the question soberly, and began to think something besides fun might come of it. The pioneers rejoiced over several hard-won battles, and the scoffers came to see that the truest glory was won by those who did the hard work, and stood by a good cause when most unpopular, not by those who kept out of the field till the fight was over, and then came in to wave the flags and beat the drums over victories they had not helped to win.

"It seems to me that these Englishwomen make less noise and do more work than we Americans. I shouldn't dare to say so in public; but their quiet, orderly ways suit me better than the more demonstrative performances of my friends at home. Slow coaches as we call them, I should not be surprised if they got the suffrage before we did, as the tortoise won in the fable," was Lavinia's secret thought as they drove away, after a very charming evening.

Perhaps the fact that reforms of all sorts had been poured into her ears till her head was like a hive of bees, may account for this unpatriotic thought. Or it may be the pleasant effect of the healthful aspect of these English workers. Old or young, all seemed to have cheerful, well-balanced

minds, in strong, healthy bodies. No one complained of her nerves, or let them unconsciously put a sharp edge to her tongue, give a blue tinge to the world, or sour the milk of human kindness in her heart. Less quick and bright, perhaps, than the ladies over the sea, but more womanly, and full of a quiet tenacity of purpose better than eloquence.

Miss Livy's tastes being of a peculiar sort, and pictures having palled upon her to such a degree that she couldn't even look at an ornamental sign-board without disgust, she often left her more artistic friends and went forth on excursions of her own. As she never used either map or guide-book, it was a wonder how she found her way; and the infants were often on the point of sending for the city crier, if there is such a functionary, to find the lost duenna. But old Livy always turned up at last, mud to the eyes, tired out, and more deeply impressed than ever with the charms of London.

One day she set forth to hear Spurgeon. Being told that Lambeth was a wretched quarter of the city, that the Tabernacle was two or three miles away, and very difficult to enter when found, only

added zest to the thing, and she departed, sure of finding adventures, if not Spurgeon.

If an omnibus conductor had not befriended her, she would probably have found herself at Hampstead or Chelsea, for London busses are as bewildering as London streets. Thanks to this amiable man, who evidently felt that the stranger in his gates needed all his care, the old lady safely reached the Elephant and Castle, and was dismissed with a moss rose-bud from the lips of her friend, a reassuring pat on the shoulder, and a paternal, "'Ere yer are, my dear," which unexpected attentions caused her to depart with speed.

There certainly was need of a Tabernacle in that quarter, for the poverty and wickedness were very dreadful. Boys not yet in their teens staggered by half tipsy, or lounged at the doors of gin-shops. Bonnetless girls roamed about singing and squabbling. Forlorn babies played in the gutter, and men and women in every stage of raggedness and degradation marred the beauty of that fair Sunday morning.

Crowds were swarming into the Tabernacle; but, thanks to the order a friend had given her, Miss

Livy was handed to a comfortable seat with a haggard Magdalen on one side, and a palsy-stricken old man on the other. Staring about her, she saw an immense building with two galleries extending round three sides, and a double sort of platform behind and below the pulpit, which was a little pen lifted high that all might see and hear.

Every seat, aisle, window-ledge, step, and doorway was packed with a strange congregation; all nations, all colors, all ages, and nearly all bearing the sad marks of poverty or sin. They all sung, cried out if any thing affected or pleased them in the sermon, and listened with intensest interest to the plain yet fervent words of the man who has gathered together this flock of black sheep and is so faithful a shepherd to them.

Every one knows how Spurgeon looks in pictures, but in the pulpit he reminded Livy of Martin Luther. A square, florid face, stout figure, a fine keen eye, and a natural, decided manner, very impressive. A strong, clear voice of much dramatic power, and a way of walking the pulpit like Father Taylor.

His sermon was on "Small Temptations," and he illustrated it by facts and examples taken from real

life, pointing out several of his congregation, and calling them by name, which original proceeding seemed to find favor with his people. He used no notes, but talked rather than preached; and leaning over the railing, urged, argued, prayed, and sang with a hearty eloquence, very effective, and decidedly refreshing after High Church mummery abroad, and drowsy Unitarianism at home. Now and then he stopped to give directions for the comfort of his flock in a free and easy manner, which called up irresistible smiles on the faces of strangers.

"Mrs. Flacker, you'd better take that child into the anteroom: he's tired." "Come this way, friends: there's plenty of room." "Open all the windows, Manning: it's very warm." And when a sad sort of cry interrupted him, he looked down at an old woman shaking with epilepsy, and mildly remarked, "Don't be troubled, brethren: our sister is subject to fits," and preached tranquilly on.

For two hours he held that great gathering, in spite of heat, discomfort, and other afflictions of the flesh, and ended by saying, in a paternal way,—

"Now remember what I've said through the

week, and next Sunday show me that I haven't talked in vain."

He read a list of meetings for every night in the week. One especially struck Livy, as it was for mothers to meet and talk over with him the best ways of teaching and training their children. Spurgeon evidently does not spare his own time and strength; and, whatever his creed may be, he is a good Christian in loving his neighbor *better* than himself, and doing the work his hand finds to do with all his might.

"That is a better church than most of those I enter where respectable saints have the best seats, and there is no place for sinners," said Livy when she got home. "Spurgeon's congregation preached more eloquently to me than he did. The Magdalen cried as if her heart was broken, and I am sure those tears washed some of her sins away. The feeble old man looked as if he had found a staff for his trembling hands to lay hold upon, and the forlorn souls all about me, for a time at least, laid down their burdens and found rest and comfort in their Father's house. It did me more good than the preaching of all the bishops in London, or the finest pageant at

St. Paul's, and I am truly glad I went, though the saucy conductor did smirk at me over the rosebud."

In contrast to this serious expedition, the old lady had a very jolly one not long afterward. A certain congenial Professor asked her one day what person, place, or thing in London she most desired to see.

Clasping her hands with the energy of deep emotion, she replied, —

"The home of the immortal Sairy Gamp. Long ago I made a vow, if I ever came to London I'd visit that spot. Let me keep my vow."

"You shall!" responded the Professor with a responsive ardor, which caused Livy to dive into her waterproof without another word.

Away they went in a pouring rain, and what people thought of the damp but enthusiastic couple who pervaded the city that day I can't say; I only know a merrier pair of pilgrims never visited those grimy shrines. They met several old friends, and passed several familiar spots by the way. Major Bagstock and Cousin Phenix stared at them from a club-house window. Tigg Montague's cab dashed by them in Regent street, more gorgeous than ever. The brothers Cheeryble went trotting cityward arm in

arm, with a smile and ha'penny for all the beggars they met; and the Micawber family passed them in a bus, going, I suppose, to accompany the blighted Wilkins to jail.

In a certain grimly genteel street they paused to stare up at a row of grimly respectable houses; for, though the name wasn't on any of the doors, they were sure Mr. Dombey still lived there. A rough dog lay on one of the doorsteps, and a curtain fluttered at an open upper window. Poor Di was growling in his sleep, and above there little Paul was watching for the golden water on the wall, while faithful Florence sung to him, and Susan Nipper put away derisive sniffs and winks in closets and behind doors for the benefit of "them Pipchinses."

Coming to a poorer part of the city, they met Tiny Tim tapping along on his little crutch, passed Toby Veck at a windy street-corner, and saw all the little Tetterbys playing in the mud.

"Come down this street, and take a glimpse at St. Giles, the worst part of London," said the Professor; and, following, Livy saw misery enough in five minutes to make her heart ache for the day. A

policeman kept near them, saying it wasn't safe to go far there alone.

Vice, poverty, dirt, and suffering reigned supreme within a stone's throw of one of the great thoroughfares, and made Alsatia dangerous ground for respectable feet. Here, too, they saw familiar phantoms: poor Jo, perpetually moving on; and little Oliver, led by Nancy, with a shawl over her head and a black eye; Bill Sykes, lounging in a doorway, looking more ruffianly than ever; and the Artful Dodger, who kept his eye on them as two hopeful "plants" with profitable pockets ready for him.

They soon had enough of this, and hurried on along High Holborn, till they came to Kingsgate street, so like the description that I am sure Dickens must have been there and taken notes. They knew the house in a moment: there were the two dingy windows over the bird-shop; the checked curtains were drawn, but of course the bottomless bandboxes, the wooden pippins, green umbrella, and portrait of Miss Harris were all behind them. It seemed so real that they quite expected to see a red, snuffy old face appear, and to hear a drowsy voice exclaim: "Drat that bell: I'm a coming. Don't tell me

it's Mrs. Wilkins, without even a pincushion prepared."

While Livy stood gazing in silent satisfaction (merely regretting that the name on the door was Pendergast, not Sweedle-pipes), the Professor turned to a woman, and asked with admirable gravity, "Can you tell me where Mrs. Gamp lives?"

"What's her business?" demanded the matron, with interest.

"A nurse, ma'am."

"Is she a little fat woman?"

"Fat, decidedly, and old," returned the professor, without a smile on his somewhat cherubic countenance.

"Well, she lives No. 5, round the corner."

On receiving this unexpected reply, they looked at one another in comic dismay; but would certainly have gone to No. 5, and taken a look at the modern Sairy, if the woman hadn't called out as they moved on,—

"I b'lieve that nuss's name is Britian, not Gamp; but you can ask."

Murmuring a hasty "thank you," they fled pre-

cipitately round the corner, and there enjoyed a glorious laugh under an umbrella, to the great amazement of all beholders.

Being on a Dickens pilgrimage, they went to Furnival's Inn, where he wrote "Pickwick" in a three-story room, and read it to the old porter. The same old porter told them all about it, and quite revelled in the remembrance. It did one's heart good to see the stiff, dried-up old fellow thaw and glow with the recollection of the handsome young man who was kind to him long ago, before the world had found him out.

"Did you think the book would be famous when he read it to you in 1834, as you say?" asked the Professor, beaming at him in a way that would have melted the heart of the stiff-tailed lion of the Northumberlands, if he'd possessed such an organ.

"O dear, yes, sir; I felt sure it would be summat good, it made me laugh so. *He* didn't think much of it; but I know a good thing when I see it," and the old man gave an important nod, as if all the credit of the blessed Pickwick belonged to him. "He married Miss Hogarth while livin' here; and

you can see the room, if you like," he added, with a burst of hospitality, as the almighty sixpence touched his palm.

Up they went, over the worn stairs; and, finding the door locked, solemnly touched the brass knob, read the name "Ed Peck" on the plate, and wiped their feet on a very dirty mat. It was ridiculous, of course; but hero-worship is not the worst of modern follies, and when one's hero has won from the world some of its heartiest smiles and tears one may be forgiven for a little sentiment in a dark entry.

Next they went to the Saracen's Head, where Mr. Squeers stopped when in London. The odd old place looked as if it hadn't changed a particle. There was the wooden gallery outside, where the chamber-maids stood to see the coach off; the archway under which poor Nicholas drove that cold morning; the office, or bar, where the miserable little boys shivered while they took alternate sips out of one mug, and bolted hunches of bread and butter as Squeers "nagged" them in private and talked to them like a father in public. Livy was tempted to bring away a little porter-pot hanging outside the

door, as a trophy; but fearing Squeers's squint eye was upon her, she refrained, and took a muddy pebble instead.

They took a peep at the Temple and its garden. The fountain was not playing, but it looked very pleasant, nevertheless; and as they stood there the sun came out, as if anxious that they should see it at its best. It was all very well to know that Shakspeare's Twelfth Night was played in Middle Temple Hall, that the York and Lancaster roses grew here, that Dr. Johnson lived No. 1 Inner Temple Lane, and that Goldsmith died No. 2 Brick Court, Middle Temple; these actual events and people seemed far less real than the scenes between Pendennis and Fanny, John Westlock and little Ruth Pinch. For their sakes Livy went to see the place; and for their sakes she still remembers that green spot in the heart of London, with the June sunshine falling on it as it fell that day.

The pilgrimage ended with a breathless climb up the monument, whence they got a fine view of London, and better still of Todgerses. Livy found the house by instinct; and saw Cherry Pecksniff, now a sharp-nosed old woman, sitting at the back window.

A gaunt, anxious-looking lady, in a massive bonnet, crossed the yard, with a basket in her hand; and the Professor said at once, "That's Mrs. Todgers, and the amount of gravy single gentlemen eat is still weighing heavy on her mind." As if to make the thing quite perfect, they discovered fitful glimpses of a tousled-looking boy, cleaning knives or boots, in a cellar-kitchen; and all the lawyers in London couldn't have argued them out of their firm belief that it was young Bailey, undergoing his daily torment in company with the black beetles and the mouldy bottles.

That nothing might be wanting to finish off the rainy-day ramble in an appropriate manner, when Livy's companion asked what she'd have for lunch, she boldly replied, —

"Weal pie and a pot of porter."

As she was not fond of either, it was a sure proof of the sincerity of her regard for the persons who have made them immortal. They went into an eating-house, and ordered the lunch, finding themselves objects of interest to the other guests. But, though a walking door-mat in point of mud, and somewhat flushed and excited by the hustling,

climbing, and adoring, it is certain there wasn't a happier spinster in this "Piljin Projess of a wale," than the one who partook of "weal pie" in memory of Sam Weller and drank "a modest quencher" to the health of Dick Swiveller at the end of that delightful Dickens day.

Much might be written about the domestic pleasures of English people, but as the compiler of this interesting work believes in the sacredness of private life, and has a holy horror of the dreadful people who outrage hospitality by basely reporting all they have seen and heard, she will practise what she preaches, and firmly resist the temptation to describe the delights of country strolls with poets, cosey five-o'clock teas in famous drawing-rooms, and interviews with persons whose names are household words.

This virtuous reticence leaves the best untold, and brings the story of two of our travellers to a speedy end. Matilda decided to remain and study art, spending her days copying Turner at the National Gallery, and her evenings in the society of the eight agreeable gentlemen who adorned the house where she abode.

Amanda hurried home with friends to enjoy a festive summer among the verdant plains of Cape Cod. With deep regret did her mates bid her adieu, and nothing but the certainty of soon embracing her again would have reconciled Livy to the parting; for in Amanda she had found that rare and precious treasure, a friend.

"Addio, my beloved Granny, take care of your dear bones and come home soon," said Amanda, in the little back entry, while her luggage was being precipitated downstairs.

"Heaven bless and keep you safe, my own Possum. I shall not stay long because I can't possibly get on without you," moaned Livy, clinging to the departing treasure as Diogenes might have clung to his honest man, if he ever found him; for, with better luck than the old philosopher, Livy had searched long years for a friend to her mind, and got one at last.

"Don't be sentimental, girls," said Matilda, with tears in her eyes, as she hugged her Mandy, and bore her to the cab.

"Rome and Raphael for ever!" cried Amanda, as a cheerful parting salute.

"London and Turner!" shouted Matilda with her answering war-cry.

"Boston and Emerson!" sobbed Lavinia, true to her idols even in the deepest woe.

Then three damp pocket-handkerchiefs waved wildly till the dingy cab with the dear Egyptian nose at the window, and the little bath-pan clattering frantically up aloft, vanished round the corner, leaving a void behind that all Europe could not fill.

A few weeks later Livy followed, leaving Mat to enjoy the liberty with which American girls may be trusted when they have a purpose or a profession to keep them steady. And so ended the travels of the trio, travels which had filled a year with valuable experiences, memorable days, and that culture which a larger knowledge of the world, our fellow-men, and ourselves gives to the fortunate souls to whom this pleasure is permitted.

One point was satisfactorily proved by the successful issue of this partnership; for, in spite of many prophecies to the contrary, three women, utterly unlike in every respect, had lived happily together for twelve long months, had travelled unprotected

safely over land and sea, had experienced two revolutions, an earthquake, an eclipse, and a flood, yet met with no loss, no mishap, no quarrel, and no disappointment worth mentioning.

With this triumphant statement as a moral to our tale, we would respectfully advise all timid sisters now lingering doubtfully on the shore, to strap up their bundles in light marching order, and push boldly off. They will need no protector but their own courage, no guide but their own good sense and Yankee wit, and no interpreter if that woman's best gift, the tongue, has a little French polish on it.

Dear Amandas, Matildas, and Lavinias, why delay? Wait for no man, but take your little store and invest it in something far better than Paris finery, Geneva jewelry, or Roman relics. Bring home empty trunks, if you will, but heads full of new and larger ideas, hearts richer in the sympathy that makes the whole world kin, hands readier to help on the great work God gives humanity, and souls elevated by the wonders of art and the diviner miracles of Nature.

Leave *ennui* and discontent, frivolity and feeble-

ness, among the ruins of the old world, and bring home to the new the grace, the culture, and the health which will make American women what now they just fail of being, the bravest, brightest, happiest, and handsomest women in the world.

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The following verbatim copy of a letter from a "little woman" is a specimen of many which enthusiasm for her book has dictated to the author of "Little Women:" —

——— March 12, 1870.

DEAR JO, OR MISS ALCOTT, — We have all been reading "Little Women," and we liked it so much I could not help wanting to write to you. We think *you* are perfectly splendid; I like you better every time I read it. We were all so disappointed about your not marrying Laurie; I cried over that part, — I could not help it. We all liked Laurie ever so much, and almost killed ourselves laughing over the funny things you and he said.

We are six sisters and two brothers; and there were so many things in "Little Women" that seemed so natural, especially selling the rags.

Eddie is the oldest; then there is Annie (our Meg), then Nelly (that's me), May and Milly (our Beths), Rosie, Rollie, and dear little Carrie (the baby). Eddie goes away to school, and when he comes home for the holidays we have lots of fun, playing cricket, croquet, base ball, and every thing. If you ever want to play any of those games, just come to our house, and you will find plenty children to play with you.

If you ever come to ———, I do wish you would come and see us, — we would like it so much.

I have named my doll after you, and I hope she will try and deserve it.

I do wish you would send me a picture of you. I hope your health is better and you are having a nice time.

If you write to me, please direct ——— Ill. All the children send their love.

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A specimen letter from a little woman to the author of "Little Men."

June 17, 1871.

DEAR MISS ALCOTT, — We have just finished "Little Men," and like it so much that we thought we would write and ask you to write another book sequel to "Little Men," and have more about Laurie and Amy, as we like them the best. We are the Literary Club, and we got the idea from "Little Women." We have a paper two sheets of foolscap and a half. There are four of us, two cousins and my sister and myself Our assumed names are: Horace Greeley, President; Susan B. Anthony, Editor; Harriet B Stowe, Vice-President; and myself, Anna C. Ritchie, Secretary. We call our paper the "Saturday Night," and we all write stories and have reports of sermons and of our meetings, and write about the queens of England. We did not know but you would like to hear this, as the idea sprang from your book; and we thought we would write, as we liked your book *so* much. And now, if it is not too much to ask of you, I wish you would answer this, as we are very impatient to know if you will write another book; and please answer soon, as Miss Anthony is going away, and she wishes very much to hear from you before she does. If you write, please direct to ——— Street, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Yours truly,

ALICE ———.

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"Such is the title of a volume by Miss Louisa M. Alcott, author of 'Little Women,' one of the most charming productions of the day. Miss Alcott is a New England woman of the best type, — gifted, refined, progressive in her opinions, heroic, self-sacrificing. She devoted her time and means to the service of her country in the darkest days of the Rebellion, visiting the camp and the hospital, devoting herself to the care of the sick and the dying, braving danger and privation in the sacred cause of humanity. The results of her experience are embodied in these 'Sketches,' which are graphic in narrative, rich in incident, and dramatic in style. Miss Alcott has a keen sense of the ludicrous, and, while she does not trifle with her subject, seeks to amuse as well as instruct her reader. She has the sunniest of tempers, and sees a humorous side even to the sad life of the hospital." — *San Francisco Bulletin.*

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"As there was nobody to see, he just sat down and cried as hard as Dotty herself."

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